

Shaping identity and educating male choristers:  
exploring the music teacher's influence on male singers'  
self-perception during the voice change

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## **DECLARATION**

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Stellenbosch, March 2021

Marissa von Mollendorf

## ENGLISH ABSTRACT

In a country known for its cultural heritage and high standard of choir singing at school and university level, it is unsettling to realize that the number of South African high school boys participating in choral, or any other form of musical activities, is declining. The investigation towards understanding the reasons behind this phenomenon led to the identification of two central themes requiring further research. Firstly, male identity shaping during adolescence is explored, including a study on different masculinities, as well as the role of the possible selves framework, as described by Markus and Nurius (1986). Furthermore, the different roles of the music teachers and choir conductors are discussed in order to understand the influence they have on boys during adolescence.

Little research has been done locally to address the reasons behind boys' apparent lack of participation in music activities at high school level. Hence, to gain a South African perspective, questionnaires were given out to more than 250 high school boys in three different provinces in the country. The participants had to answer text-based questions on their experience dealing with voice change, their views on their respective school choirs, as well as their impressions of certain stereotypical assumptions, such as the opinion that singing is a feminine activity. Additionally, they had to complete a drawing of themselves before and after voice change. This last section utilizes a methodology that has (to my knowledge) not yet been done in this context in South Africa. In observing the drawings, I aimed to combine both the verbal and non-verbal commentary on voice change in order to gain a holistic perception of the participants' views and opinions on this matter.

By comparing the existing literature to the findings emerging from this study, I was thus able to make certain recommendations for practical application in South African schools in order to assist teachers in keeping high school boys in choral programmes.

## AFRIKAANSE OPSOMMING

In 'n land wat bekend is vir sy kulturele erfenis en hoë standaard van koorsang op skool- en universiteitsvlak, is dit onrusbarend om te besef dat die hoeveelheid Suid-Afrikaanse hoërskoolseuns wat aan koorsang of enige vorm van musikale aktiwiteite deelneem, besig is om af te neem. Die ondersoek na die oorsake van hierdie verskynsel het gelei tot die identifisering van twee sentrale temas, wat verder nagevors is. Eerstens word manlike identiteitsvorming gedurende adolessensie, insluitend 'n studie oor die verskeie vorme van manlikheid (*masculinity*) en die *possible selves* raamwerk van Markus en Nurius (1986), ondersoek. Tweedens word die verskeie rolle van musiekonderwysers en koordirigente bespreek, om sodoende die invloed wat hulle op adolessente seuns uitoefen te verstaan.

Die hoeveelheid navorsing wat reeds plaaslik gedoen is om hierdie probleem aan te spreek, is baie min. Om 'n Suid-Afrikaanse perspektief te kry, is daar vraelyste aan meer as 250 hoërskoolseuns in drie provinsies uitgegee. Die deelnemers moes teksgebaseerde vrae beantwoord aangaande hulle ervaring gedurende stemverandering, hulle standpunt oor hul onderskeie skoolkore, sowel as indrukke oor sekere stereotipiese aannames, byvoorbeeld die opinie dat sang slegs 'n vroulike aktiwiteit is. Hulle moes ook 'n skets van hulleself, voor en na die stemverandering, voltooi. Laasgenoemde deel maak gebruik van 'n metodologie wat (sover my kennis strek) nog nie in hierdie konteks in Suid-Afrika gebruik is nie. Die doel met die waarneming van die sketse is om beide die verbale én nie-verbale kommentaar aangaande stemverandering te kombineer, om sodoende 'n holistiese persepsie van die deelnemers se uitgangspunte en opinies te verkry.

Deur die bestaande literatuur met die bevindinge van hierdie studie te vergelyk, kan ek sekere voorstelle maak vir praktiese toepassing in Suid-Afrikaanse skole, om sodoende die onderwysers by te staan in hulle pogings om hoërskoolseuns se deelname aan koorprogramme te verseker.

## KEY TERMS

Adolescence

Cambiata

Choir

Masculinity

Possible selves

Self-perception

Vocal parent

Voice change

## SLEUTELTERME

Adolessensie

*Cambiata*

Koor

Manlikheid

*Possible selves*

Selfpersepsie

Stemverandering

*Vocal parent*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	i
ENGLISH ABSTRACT.....	ii
AFRIKAANSE OPSOMMING .....	iii
KEY TERMS.....	iv
SLEUTELTERME .....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES .....	ix
LIST OF TABLES .....	xi
LIST OF GRAPHS .....	xii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS.....	xiii
 CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	 1
1.1    Background .....	1
1.2    Aim of the study .....	2
1.3    Historical contextualization .....	2
1.3.1    History of boys singing .....	2
1.3.2    History of the South African curriculum.....	3
1.4    Theoretical framework.....	4
1.4.1    Cognitive-developmental theory.....	4
1.4.2    Psychosocial theory .....	5
1.4.3    Possible-selves framework.....	6
1.4.4    Csikszentmihalyi's flow theory .....	7
1.4.5    Social cognitive theory of gender development and differentiation .....	7
1.5    Research approach and chapter layout .....	8
1.6    Conclusion .....	9
 CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY.....	 10
2.1    Research questions.....	10
2.2    Research approach.....	10

2.2.1 Literature study.....	11
2.2.2 Empirical research.....	12
2.3 Sampling .....	14
2.4 Analysis of questionnaires .....	15
2.5 Art therapy and incorporating drawings in qualitative research.....	16
2.5.1 History of using art in psychotherapy .....	16
2.5.2 Incorporating drawings in qualitative research.....	18
2.5.3 Analysis of drawings .....	20
2.6 Ethics and trustworthiness.....	24
2.6.1 Ethical considerations.....	24
2.6.2 Trustworthiness.....	26
2.7 Possible shortcomings and limitations pertaining to this study .....	26
<b>CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE STUDY .....</b>	<b>29</b>
3.1 Factors that influence the lack of participation in singing activities in high school boys 29	
3.1.1 Full extra-curricular schedules, including the focus on sport.....	29
3.1.2 The need for male role models .....	31
3.1.3 The assumed feminine nature of singing.....	32
3.1.4 Inefficient teaching.....	34
3.1.5 Negativity surrounding voice change .....	44
3.1.6 Effective school leadership .....	45
3.2. Self-image, including different masculinities and the possible selves framework.....	47
3.2.1 The concept of masculinity.....	49
3.2.2 The possible selves framework.....	52
3.3. The role of the teacher .....	54
3.4 Conclusion .....	57
<b>CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS (PART 1).....</b>	<b>59</b>
4.1 First round of research (January – February 2019).....	60
4.2 Second round of research (July – August 2019).....	69
<b>CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS (PART 2).....</b>	<b>94</b>
5.1 Introduction.....	94
5.1.1 Physical changes.....	95
5.1.2 Psychological changes .....	101
5.1.3 Vocal changes .....	111



5.1.4	No perceived changes.....	121
5.2	Conclusion .....	127
<b>CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION.....</b>		<b>128</b>
6.1	Reasons for boys' lack of participation in singing activities .....	128
6.2	Discussion of the research questions .....	131
6.3	Secondary questions emerging from the research .....	133
6.4	Recommendations for practical application.....	134
6.5	Recommendations for further studies.....	138
6.6	Other contributions to the academic field .....	139
6.7	Conclusion .....	140
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>		<b>143</b>
 <b>ADDENDUM A: Ethical clearance .....</b>		<b>171</b>
<b>ADDENDUM B: Permission from the respective education departments to conduct research in government schools.....</b>		<b>174</b>
<b>ADDENDUM C: Letter to headmasters .....</b>		<b>178</b>
<b>ADDENDUM D: Headmasters' permission .....</b>		<b>180</b>
<b>ADDENDUM E: Letter to parents .....</b>		<b>184</b>
<b>ADDENDUM F: Letter to participants .....</b>		<b>188</b>
<b>ADDENDUM G: Questionnaire .....</b>		<b>191</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Lack of horizontal baseline (Goodnow, 1977:17) .....	21
Figure 2.2 Avoiding crossing of lines (Goodnow, 1977:21) .....	22
Figure 3.1 Cooper's advised ranges for each voice group (Stockton, 2015:80) .....	36
Figure 3.2 Cooksey's Stages of the Boy's changing Voice (Freer, 2012b) .....	38
Figure 5.1 Larger feet and hands .....	96
Figure 5.2 Muscles.....	97
Figure 5.3 Bodily hair .....	98
Figure 5.4 Hairy and manly .....	98
Figure 5.5 Body builder .....	99
Figure 5.6 Biceps .....	99
Figure 5.7 From "chubby" to "killer abs" .....	100
Figure 5.8 Becoming a man .....	101
Figure 5.9 Leave the younger ones behind .....	102
Figure 5.10 Self-esteem .....	103
Figure 5.11 Comfortable in my body.....	104
Figure 5.12 Speaking your mind.....	105
Figure 5.13 Public speaking.....	105
Figure 5.14 Grown up and serious.....	106
Figure 5.15 Normal.....	107
Figure 5.16 Deeper and serious .....	109
Figure 5.17 Missing camaraderie.....	110
Figure 5.18 Voice lowering .....	111
Figure 5.19 Primary vs. high school range .....	112
Figure 5.20 Range and breath control.....	112
Figure 5.21 "Squeeck" (sic) .....	113
Figure 5.22 Applause .....	114
Figure 5.23 Opera singer.....	114
Figure 5.24 Hard rocker voice .....	115
Figure 5.25 Yaay, I can sing!.....	116
Figure 5.26 Cum Laude .....	117

Figure 5.27 Eeww!! .....	118
Figure 5.28 That's bad.....	119
Figure 5.29 Don't know what to sing .....	120
Figure 5.30 No more shower songs .....	121
Figure 5.31 Just the range .....	122
Figure 5.32 Exactly the same.....	123
Figure 5.33 A natural occurrence.....	125
Figure 5.34 Not conscious of changes .....	126

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: Phases of cognitive development (McLeod, 2018) .....	5
Table 1.2: Eriksons's psychosocial phases .....	6
Table 1.3 Dates of data collection.....	14
Table 4.1 Distribution of question 17 scores: First round of research.....	67
Table 4.2 Two-way summary table .....	71
Table 4.3 Rating of the school choir by choir singers .....	75
Table 4.4 Rating of the school choir by non-singers .....	75
Table 4.5 Holistic view of the descriptive statistics to question 17.....	78
Table 4.6 T-test: Singing is a feminine activity (question 17).....	81
Table 4.7 T-test: Sports are more masculine than choir (question 17) .....	82
Table 4.8 T-test: Choir + sport more masculine than just choir (question 17) .....	83
Table 4.9 T-test: Bases more masculine than tenors (question 17) .....	84
Table 4.10 T-test: Embarrassing if girls hear you sing (question 17).....	85
Table 4.11 T-test: Joining because of friends joining (question 17).....	86
Table 4.12 Wilcoxon: Singing is a feminine activity (question 17) .....	87
Table 4.13 Wilcoxon: Sports are more masculine than choir (question 17).....	87
Table 4.14 Wilcoxon: Choir + sport more masculine than just choir (question 17).....	87
Table 4.15 Wilcoxon: Bases more masculine than tenors (question 17) .....	87
Table 4.16 Wilcoxon: Embarrassing if girls hear you sing (question 17) .....	88
Table 4.17 Wilcoxon: Joining because of friends joining (question 17) .....	88
Table 4.18 Choir singers vs. non-singers (question 17).....	90
Table 4.19 All-boys' vs. mixed-gender schools (question 17).....	90

## LIST OF GRAPHS

Graph 4.1 Feelings towards voice changing process .....	62
Graph 4.2 Likelihood of combining sport and choir.....	69
Graph 4.3 Guidance during voice change.....	70
Graph 4.4 Voice preference (current or previous voice) .....	72
Graph 4.5 Voice change experience .....	73
Graph 4.6 Choir success rating .....	76
Graph 4.7 Box and Whiskers Plot: Bases more masculine than tenors (question 17).....	88
Graph 4.8 Choice between sport and choir.....	92
Graph 4.9 Likelihood of combining sport and choir.....	93

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS**

ANC	African National Congress
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statements
FET	Further Education and Training phase
FSH	Follicle stimulating hormones
GnRH	Gonadotropin-releasing hormones
IQ	Intelligence quotient
LH	Luteinizing hormones
PTSD	Post-traumatic stress disorder
REC	Research Ethics Committee
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

In 2008, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) produced a documentary series in the United Kingdom (UK) with the remarkable title "The Choir: Boys Don't Sing". Throughout the various episodes, choir director Gareth Malone was accompanied, describing his attempt to establish a successful boys' choir at a state school in Lancaster (UK). Right at the beginning of the series, Malone is filmed while in discussion with a group of male learners, questioning their hesitation to join a choir. One of the answers he received from a young boy came straight to the point: singing is gay! (Isaacs, Mitchell, Whalley, Willis & Lansdale, 2008: 00:18).

"Singing is gay". What was clearly stated as an honest opinion from a 12-year-old boy left me perplexed and contemplating his reaction. Is this the perception boys have about singing? Is there a certain fear to join a choir, even if boys feel a fascination for choral music? Are prejudices preventing boys from interacting with cultural activities? If so, how can we educate young male learners to make unbiased decisions?

In my many years as a professional educator in music, choral singing has always formed part of my life. Besides being trained as a classical solo singer, I love singing in choirs and have done so for all my schooling years, as well as a few wonderful ad-hoc opportunities as adult. I have also had the privilege of accompanying many different choirs, both at school and professional level. During all this time, observing the seemingly unbalanced nature of a typical South African high school mixed-voice choir (consisting of a majority of girls and only a few boys, who are normally singing in unison) remains troubling to me. Additionally, teachers also have a very difficult time convincing boys to take part on stage when performing concerts and musicals. I therefore decided to test this boy's perspective on the learners in my Creative Arts (music) class. While speaking with a grade 9 class, I asked who of them feel that they can sing. Out of a class of about 30 students, two boys raised their hands. Following this, I asked: who sang choir in primary school? About 18 hands went up. Finally, I posed the question: what changed? The agreed-upon answer given repeatedly was that they sang until their voices started changing, and then the primary school choir teacher sent them back to class.

I now had two very interesting schools of thought about this phenomenon. Firstly, a boy from the UK proclaiming that singing is gay; and then some boys from my own class believing that they couldn't sing anymore, because their voices had changed. This led me to ask the initial question that put this study in motion: what are the dominant reasons for the lack of high school boys participating in musical activities (focusing on choir singing)?

## **1.2 Aim of the study**

After discovering the most agreed upon reasons for high school boys' lack of participation in music activities, I identified two aspects that ultimately became my research questions. Essentially, the focus of this study will be on the various influences on male learners' self-perceptions during the voice change. Additionally, the role of the schoolteacher or school choir conductor in the process of male identity shaping will also be investigated, specifically during the period of voice change. Although I am aware that the process of voice change has been researched thoroughly, the inquiry into "how boys *felt* about the voice-change process" has not entirely been answered (Warzecha, 2013:44, Williamson, 2018:6). Locally, very little research has been done in this regard and more insight might be of cardinal value for music educators and choir conductors in the majority of South African schools.

## **1.3 Historical contextualization**

To understand this phenomenon, it is important to examine its historical context. The following paragraphs firstly contain a section on the history of boys singing, to explain the historical significance of the unchanged versus the changed voice; and then a brief overview of the South African schooling system. The latter was included to highlight that without certain conscious efforts by parents and teachers, music will not be accessible to all boys.

### **1.3.1 History of boys singing**

The perceived negativity from boys towards music is not a new phenomenon. Whilst some sources reflect to a time when making music in public was "male dominated" (Stohlmann, 2018:13), other scholars express the view that the appearance of "under-enrolment of male singers" (Brand, 2019:2) has been evident for many decades. Warzecha (2013:43) witnesses that "many males exhibit negative perceptions of singing" already in 1916. Also in 1916, Grace (1916, quoted in Harrison, 2007:268) mentions a "shortage of men, boys and money in choirs".



In 1941, Viggiano (in Harrison, 2007) strived to reach those adolescents “who think it’s sissy to sing” (2007:268).

Contrarily, the European tradition of boys singing (especially in a church environment) can be traced back to Pope Sylvester (Henderson, 1921 in Stockton, 2015:76), who interpreted the words of the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:34<sup>1</sup> as to mean that women, not being allowed to speak, should also not be allowed to sing in church congregations (Vasold, 2005). Consequently, “boy-sopranos were sought for their clear, bell-like timbres” (Friar, 1999:26) to fulfil the role of female voices in cathedral choirs, operas and concert roles (Vassold, 2005). However, this also resulted in adolescent males being forced to sing in their unchanged voices for as long as they could, and ultimately to the tradition of castration (Jenkins, 2000:1503), a procedure that dates back to 2000 B. C. (Fisher, 2009:37). Although the practice of castration decreased from the late 1700’s (Stockton, 2015:76), there are records of the Sistine Chapel using castrati singers until as relatively recently as 1913 (Fisher, 2009:37). The last castrato singer, Allesandro Moreschi, left the papal choir after Pope Pius X (1903–1914) announced a decree forbidding the use of castrati in choirs (Vasold, 2005).

It therefore seems that, historically, two schools of thought surrounding male participation in choir singing can be identified from the European background given above. Firstly, evidence of the perceived negativity towards singing proves that this phenomenon is not a recent development. Secondly, however, the tradition of boys singing in church choirs is also an age-old practice, as evidenced with many children’s choirs (faith-related or not) still active in South Africa and around the world.

### **1.3.2 History of the South African curriculum**

After the first democratic elections in 1994, “education democratisation has been formalised” by the newly elected governing party (namely the African National Congress, or ANC) (Moloi, 2014:264 - 265), as a means of providing equal learning opportunities for all children, irrespective of ethnic background or culture. This brought about many changes, such as the complete “overhaul” of the curriculum studied in schools (White paper on Education and training, 1995). In the context of Music, the overhaul meant the excision of Class Music as a primary school subject, to be replaced with an inclusive Arts and Culture period as part of the

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 14:34 (KJV): Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also saith the law (King James Bible Online, 2020).

new “Curriculum 2005”. Arts and Culture were to consist of a combination of music, visual art, drama, dance, craft design, media and communication (Rijsdijk, 2003:28).

In 2012, Arts and Culture was replaced by Creative Arts in the current Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statements (CAPS) curriculum. During the foundation and intermediate phases, Creative Arts is now sorted under the subject “Life skills” (Department of Basic Education, 2011). In the senior phase (grade 7 – 9), the subject is presented as a learning area on its own, and the onus lies on schools to implement any two disciplines from the categories of Dance, Music, Visual Art and Drama (Goldstone, 2016:29).

These changes fundamentally meant that, while all male learners<sup>2</sup> (naturally, this applies to the female learners as well), were used to singing in groups until approximately 30 years ago, a much smaller group is currently exposed to music. This might suggest that boys’ ears are no longer trained for correct pitching by group singing, nor are they exposed to the joy and camaraderie of singing together. In many personal encounters, I have experienced that many conductors are of the opinion that it has therefore become increasingly problematic to source boys with good voices and who actually want to sing in the choir.

## **1.4 Theoretical framework**

The theoretical framework consists of five theories that were utilized as an underlying foundation to this study. The respective theories, namely the theory of cognitive development (1.4.1), psycho-social theory (1.4.2), the possible selves framework (1.4.3), flow (1.4.4) and the social cognitive theory of gender development and differentiation (1.4.5) will be briefly mentioned below in the order in which they are presented in the literature study. It goes without saying that it is not possible to describe the theories in detail at this point. The sources mentioned below should be consulted for an in-depth study into the different theories.

### **1.4.1 Cognitive-developmental theory**

The cognitive-developmental theory developed by Jean Piaget posits that every person goes through certain cognitive stages of development, from infancy until reaching maturity (Girgis, Lee, Goodarzi & Ditterich, 2018:1). According to Piaget, each of these stages can be clearly

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<sup>2</sup> Some sources suggest that Class Music was not taught at the so-called “Black” schools during the Apartheid era, due to a lack of proper equipment and qualified music teachers (Malan, 2015:12).

distinguished and will occur in a set order as seen below in table 1.1 (Louw, 1998:460). Loxton (2004a:35 – 36) further summarises this theory by explaining that each stage is accompanied by two processes, namely “assimilation” (to interpret new experiences by incorporating them to that which is already known) and “accommodation” (to change existing systems to adapt to new experiences).

The phases of development, according to Piaget, are shown in table 1.1 below.

**Table 1.1: Phases of cognitive development (Loxton, 2004a:36)**

Phase	Description
Sensorimotor (from birth – 2 years)	Getting to know the world and learning about “object permanence” (an object being there, even though it may not be seen).
Pre-operational (2 – 7 years)	Using language and forming concepts, although still egocentric in nature
Concrete-operational (7 – 11 years)	The start of logical thoughts
Formal-operational (11 years +)	This phase lasts into adulthood and is characterized by the gain of abstract thoughts and the ability to test hypotheses.

### 1.4.2 Psychosocial theory

According to Erik Erikson’s psychosocial theory, human development essentially happens as a result of the interaction between individual needs and abilities versus the expectations of the community. His theory is based on a grouping of the different phases of life, linked to certain developmental tasks or social life lessons. These tasks are often labelled as “psychosocial problems” or “crises” (Munley, 1975:314). The outlay of this theory, as summarized by Wait (2004a:13-16) can be seen in table 1.2 below.

**Table 1.2: Eriksson's psychosocial phases**

Phase	Developmental task
1. Infancy	Trust vs. mistrust
2. Early childhood	Autonomy vs. shame/doubt
3. Preschool	Initiative vs. guilt
4. School age	Industry vs. inferiority
5. Adolescence	Identity vs. confusion
6. Young adulthood	Intimacy vs. isolation
7. Middle adulthood	Generativity vs. stagnation
8. Maturity	Integrity vs. despair

To understand this theory, it is important to recognise Erikson's explanation of the three "complementary organisational processes" taking place throughout one's lifetime. These processes are, firstly, the biological process which he labelled the "soma"; secondly the psychic process, or the "psyche"; and finally, the interpersonal process, known as the "ethos". Working together, these processes allow the individual to solve certain syntonic and dystonic tendencies associated with each developmental process, in order to arrive at a "lasting outcome to the favourable ratios" (Bugajska, 2017:1097).

### **1.4.3 Possible-selves framework**

In 1986, Hazel Markus and Paula Nurius published a definition of their theory on possible selves<sup>3</sup>. The abstract of their article states that "[P]ossible selves represent individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming" (Markus & Nurius, 1986:954). Markus and Nurius (1986) continues in explaining that possible selves can be seen as "views of the self that often have not been verified or confirmed by social experience" (1986:955). The significance of their theory is found firstly in

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<sup>3</sup> Some sources refer to this theory as a terminological entity, using capital letters. Markus and Nurius (1986) however, referred to "possible selves" without labeling it as an official theory.

its purpose of acting as an “incentive for future behaviour”, by creating a range of possibilities between the idealized self and the eschewed self. Secondly, the theory also stimulates the evaluation of the current self (1986:954), in order to create an adaptable self-identity (Henry & Cliffordson, 2013:274). According to Yang and Noels (2013), scholars posit that both the wished-for self and the feared-self serve as incentives for behaviour, as people work towards certain aims (wished-for), and avoid the consequences of missing the goal (feared) (2013:317). Furthermore, this theory also propose that it is possible to change one’s identity in favour of the wished-for elements in the positive possible self (Stam, Lord, Van Knippenberg & Wisse, 2014:1176).

#### **1.4.4 Csikszentmihalyi’s flow theory**

After observing a creative process in which an artist endured discomforts such as hunger and fatigue while focusing on a successful painting task, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi formulated the theory of “flow”, describing it as the perspective that “a good life is characterized by complete absorption in what one does” (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009:195). To enter a “flow” state (Csikszentmihalyi’s term for a very positive psychological state), one must be cognisant of certain goals that will be challenging, yet reachable, with swift assessment or response about the progress made. According to Csikszentmihalyi (2009), this will lead to a state of “intense and focussed concentration” on the said goal, with the effect of the diminution of self-awareness (2009:195). The different elements involved in creating this state of flow are namely “challenge-skill balance, action-awareness merging, clear goals, unambiguous feedback, concentration on the task at hand, sense of control, loss of self-consciousness, transformation of time, and an autotelic experience” (Beard, 2015:353).

#### **1.4.5 Social cognitive theory of gender development and differentiation**

Formulated by Kay Bussey and Macquarie Bandura, this theory offers a social cognitive approach to gender differentiation, by detailing the way in which the concept of gender can be established from different experiences. According to Bussey and Bandura, although some elements associated with gender can only be explained from a biological point of view, many other aspects are formulated from a “cultural design”. Gender role development will therefore lean heavily on societal imitation and observing others (Bussey & Bandura, 1999:676). The significance of this theory is described as follows:

“Gender development is a fundamental issue because some of the most important aspects of people’s lives, such as the talents they cultivate, the conceptions they hold of themselves and others, the sociostructural opportunities and constraints they encounter, and the social life and occupational paths they pursue are heavily prescribed by societal gender-typing” (Bussey & Bandura, 1999:676).

## **1.5 Research approach and chapter layout**

I chose to follow a qualitative research approach, as the research questions mentioned earlier deal with human decisions and emotions which are bound to be different for every individual. This approach was initially used in the field of psychology where it became increasingly difficult to quantify results (Pathak, Jena & Kalra, 2013: 192). To understand this phenomenon, information was gathered by firstly doing an in-depth study of the existing sources of the reasons behind the lack of boys participating in choirs. Thereafter, an empirical study was conducted, targeting boys from four different high schools across South Africa.

According to Brand (2019:3), there is a lack of information regarding male participation that are gathered directly from adolescent boys. The opinions that these boys (the respective grade 8 classes and choir singers) had to offer proved to be very valuable to this study. The participants were asked to complete a questionnaire on their feelings surrounding choir and voice change. Answers were required in the form of tick-boxes, own-wording, as well as the drawing of a self-image as a new, experimental section. The rationale behind the respective questions, as well as the drawing, will be discussed in detail in the chapter on methodology (chapter 3), and again in the chapters on the various findings (chapters 4 and 5).

The chapters following this introduction have been grouped as follows: Rather than placing the literature study as chapter 2, it seemed natural to continue with a detailed chapter of the methodology behind the research. Chapter 2 will thus consist of a discussion on the reasoning for choosing a qualitative approach, as well as the sampling method and rationale for choosing questionnaires as primary data collection tool. The ethical considerations, as well as the trustworthiness and limitations to the study, are also discussed in this second chapter.

Thereafter, the literature study (chapter 3) and the chapters devoted to the findings of the empirical study (chapters 4 and 5) will follow. Subsequently, the findings that resulted from the data analysis are discussed and compared using a deductive approach. This was done over

two chapters (chapters 4 and 5), in order to differentiate between the written answers and the drawings. Finally, I discuss the conclusions derived from the analysis, and give recommendations, both for practical implementation and further studies (chapter 6).

## **1.6 Conclusion**

The lack of boys participating in choral singing is not a recent trend, and several scholars have suggested possible reasons behind this phenomenon. However, the amount of local research available to South African conductors and teachers is very limited. My aim is thus to present a qualitative study of the specific (South African) factors relating to this problem, with the particular focus on the adolescent male's self-image, as well as the role that the music teacher and choral conductor plays in the forming of positive identities.

I commenced this investigation using five pillars of theoretical foundation as an underlying background to this study. These theories, as mentioned under heading 1.4, will be discussed further in the literature study (chapter 3). I have also conducted an empirical study in order to capture location-specific data, the details of which will be explained in chapter 2 (Methodology).

## CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

Punch (1998, quoted in Daniel, Kumar & Omar, 2018:221) defines research methodology as “the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the selection and use of methods to the desired outcomes”. This chapter will thus be dedicated to clarifying and expanding on the research questions, whereafter the various stages of the research will be discussed. This discussion will also include the validation of the type of sampling, as well as the ethical considerations and rights surrounding the chosen participants. The method of data gathering, grouping and analysis is also explained. Finally, the validity, reliability and limitations of the study is also included in this chapter.

### 2.1 Research questions

The formulation of a good research question is the first key to a well-structured study (O’Brien & DeSisto, 2013:83). According to Lane (2018:1057), the question should be “clear, concise and focused”. As explained before, my main objective is to gain a deeper understanding of the reasons behind boys’ lack of participation in musical activities at high school level. More specifically, I want to find out what role the music teachers and boys’ self-perception play in this decision. My first research question, then, is *How is the male learner’s self-perception influenced by the process of voice change?* In addition, the second question is *What is the role of a schoolteacher or school choir conductor in the process of male identity shaping during this process?* The personal nature of these questions led me to choose a qualitative research approach, which will be discussed below.

### 2.2 Research approach

Davis (2014a:14) confirms that a qualitative research approach will help me to “understand, explore or (to) describe people’s behaviour; themes in behaviours, attitudes or trends; or relations between people’s actions”. It is therefore closely linked to interpretivism, and more specifically the traditions of phenomenology, or the “way in which individuals make sense of the world around them” (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014:28), and ethnomethodology. The latter posits “that people describe their world *as they make sense of it, not as it is*” (Auriacombe & Mouton, 2007:445). This approach is often referred to as a “whole-world experience”, as its prime interest is to gain a deeper understanding of individual human experiences (Strydom &



Bezuidenhout, 2014:174). I decided on this approach when conducting the study, as I believe that not all boys have the same feelings about adolescence and voice change. If my hypothesis is correct, this approach will be well suited for the study, because it will not try to quantify or isolate any part of the data.

The two fundamental components that this study rely on are the literature study and the qualitative empirical study. The literature study, providing an overview of the existing literature, comprises academic books and peer-reviewed articles (see 2.2.1 below). Combined with the empirical research (2.2.2), I believe that the exploratory nature of this thesis is both grounded in sound theory, as well as it being significant in discovering new elements that have, as of yet, not been discussed in the literature.

### **2.2.1 Literature study**

As very little research has been done in South Africa regarding this subject, I spent a considerable amount of time reading on the phenomenon. Mouton (2001:179) describes this process as an “exercise in inductive reasoning, where you work from a ‘sample’ of texts that you read in order to come to a proper understanding of a specific domain of scholarship”. In doing this, I aimed to present a detailed and critically analysed report on the prevailing international literature. In turn, the writing of the review also helped me identify gaps in the existing research. This served as a rationale for why this study might be of importance for the South African school environment.

Mouton (2001:179) defines literature studies as “studies that provide an overview of scholarship in a certain discipline”. The study is organised according to themes - more specifically the reasons that scholars give for boys’ non-participation in choir or musical activities at high school level. Thereafter, my hypothesis after speaking to my grade 9 class led me to focus on two of the reasons: namely negativity during voice change, and inefficient teaching. These two factors were explored further, as they relate the closest to my research questions stated above.

The literature study was written with a top-down approach, by firstly mentioning all the reasons identified for high school boys’ lack of participation in music. These reasons are (i) busy schedules and the focus on sport, (ii) role models and early experiences with music, (iii) perceptions on the feminine nature of singing, (iv) ineffective teachers, (v) negativity surrounding voice change, and (vi) the importance of school-based leadership. After a

discussion on each of these factors, the findings are streamlined to focus on the research questions pertaining to this specific study.

Although the study is classified as secondary data, its strength lies in the fact that it gives the researcher an understanding of the existing “issues and debates”, the “current theoretical thinking and definitions, as well as previous studies and their results” (Mouton, 2001:180). However, this type of research cannot produce new or empirical insights, without obtaining additional primary data.

### **2.2.2 Empirical research**

After reading and summarising the existing sources available, I also conducted an empirical study, using primary data in the form of questionnaires. The decision to use questionnaires as a primary data collection instrument was made since I wanted to include a large sample population in the study. The advantages of using this method are (amongst others) that these are inexpensive and can be evaluated and compared easily, as the questions are all standardised and objective. It also offers complete anonymity to the participants (Debois, 2019), creating a comfortable environment to collect “sincere” responses (Rada, Domínguez-Álvarez, Mejova & Weber, 2014: 258).

According to Davis (2014a:14), this type of research (i.e. the questionnaires) is referred to as “interpretive data”, which is perfect for the qualitative nature of the study. My role as a researcher is thus to obtain a holistic view, not only of the subject at hand, but also the social circumstances and contexts surrounding the study (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014:9). Falissard (2012:1) describes this as collecting “human material, most often subjective”, as it is usually open to interpretation and can bring about difficulty in assessing the data. He recommends exploratory analyses (Falissard, 2012:3) as a way of gaining new information about a topic (Davis, 2014a:12). Exploratory analysis is also used for the study of an unknown area (Davis, 2014b:75), to find links between different variables.

The questionnaire follows a three-fold approach and is divided into three sections. Based on my critical interaction with the literature, I developed all of the questions myself and did not make use of any existing questionnaires to guide me. Section A serves to learn more about the way that adolescent boys think about their voice change. Questions were asked about guidance received through the voice changing process (if any), the boy’s feelings towards his previous and changed voice, and about the process as a whole. Section B is about the boy’s feelings

towards the school choir, and music in general. Participants were asked if they are part of their school's choir, and to give a reason for participation/non-participation. They also had to rank their choir from excellent to poor and rate some generalized statements about music, such as "singing is a feminine activity" and "it is embarrassing if girls hear you sing". Both these sections consist of tick-box answers and own-wording explanations. Section C is a creative and experimental section that has never been done in South Africa in this specific context, but has been done with great success by scholars Freer and Bennett in a 2012 study conducted in Australia and the USA. I asked that the boys draw a picture of themselves before and after their voice change, and to explain in words what they have drawn. This type of data is called "respondent-generated imagery" (Pauwels, 2011:8). The theory behind analysing visual data has been included later in this chapter.

An example of the questionnaire is attached as addendum G. Questionnaires were chosen specifically in order to collect data from a larger participant group, with the time frame at hand. Although it would have been ideal to conduct personal interviews (to understand certain nuances and deeper meanings conveyed in participants' answers), it would have been near to impossible to find the time to interview a whole choir, as I could not justify taking up entire school days or choir practises. In choosing questionnaires, I merely used 45 minutes at a time, a time frame that was more acceptable to all the teachers and choir leaders involved.

Babbie (2016:262) differentiates between three types of questionnaire completion, namely self-administrated, face-to-face, and/or telephonically. I chose to be present at the time of completing the questionnaires, as I wanted to strongly emphasize the importance of the research, as well as the rights of the participants. This meant that I had to travel more than 2000 kilometres to get to all the schools involved. However, to uphold the integrity of the research was important enough for me to make two trips across South Africa to gather data.

Data was collected from four schools. Committed to the integrity of academic research, these schools will not be identified, but will be referred to as B1 (all-boys' school 1), B2 (all-boys' school 2), M1 (mixed-gender school 1) and M2 (mixed gender school 2). Table 1.3 below states the dates that I visited the schools for the two rounds of questioning. The first round of research was conducted in January – February of 2019, and I repeated the same questionnaire 6 months later (July – August 2019). These two answer sets gave me the opportunity to intensely study the ongoing process and if answers were influenced by the passage of time. According to Koonin (2014:258) this measure will increase the level of credibility of the research. Pre-testing

was done with the first choir, and upon seeing the results, I decided to use the exact questionnaire as is. This choir did not have to answer the first questionnaire for a second time.

***Table 1.3 Dates of data collection***

<b>School</b>	<b>Round 1</b>	<b>Round 2</b>
B1	28 January 2019	29 July 2019
B2	31 January 2019	25 July 2019
M1	4 February 2019	30 July 2019
M2	1 February 2019	26 July 2019

During these visits, I consulted with the participants in two sessions: one with all the boys of the school choir; and one with all the boys from a specific grade 8 class. A session consisted of a short introduction and motivation for the study, after which the boys had about 40 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Each boy was given a code to be able to compare his two sets of questionnaires after the second round of data collection.

## **2.3 Sampling**

The participants were chosen by purposive sampling. According to Pascoe (2014:142), this type of data collection is done by purposefully selecting participants with a certain set of characteristics that would benefit the study. In this case, I chose male choristers in high school; as well as male non-singers of a grade 8 class (the grade where, broadly speaking, most of the boys have to deal with voice change). The selection was made to be able to compare (i) singers to non-singers; and (ii) boys in a mixed gender school to boys in an all boys' school. In this way I could ensure that all the data captured could assist with my research. The four schools targeted consisted of two all-boys' schools, and two mixed-gender schools. Here, selection was based on the fact that the chosen schools are spread over three provinces in South Africa; and that all the schools have average to above-average choirs. The economic status of the participants range from low-middle class to upper class and different ethnicities are represented in each category of participants. For ethical reasons I did not expect respondents to reveal their

race/ethnicity in the questionnaires. However, I believe that the majority of the middle to upper class schools in South Africa will have similar demographics than the schools that I targeted.

By making this selection I hoped to find answers to my main research questions, as well as other focus areas, such as (i) do adolescent singers go through voice change easier or harder than non-singers, (ii) does the school setup (all boys versus mixed gender) play a part in the self-concept of boys' going through voice change, and (iii) is there any difference in the way that different geographical areas perceive voice change?

## 2.4 Analysis of questionnaires

In light of the qualitative nature of the study, standardized instrumentation could not be used to analyse the answers (Miles *et al*, 2014:9). Rather, I have coded the information according to certain themes, using mainly descriptive and *In Vivo* coding, in order to test the outcome to the existing research. This type of coding uses terminology, words or phrases used by the participants (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014:238) to create certain themes or scenarios. I thus hoped to discover milieu specific issues or outcomes to this phenomenon. This method of data analysis was done with great success by Freer and Bennett (2012), where outcomes of the surveys given to students at university level were sorted into the different types of possible selves that the students imagined. Thereafter, these results were tested against existing research (2012:271-281).

I started analysing the data by reading through the answers, in order for me to get a general idea of the language used, the type of answers that were given and drawings made. This holistic read-through was followed by comparing the variables in closed-ended questions, to establish certain percentages of views. From there on, discovering the reasons or motivation behind the answers required *In Vivo* coding and recognising certain patterns or themes in the answers. With advice from Professor Daan Nel from the statistics department at the University of Stellenbosch, I could also incorporate different statistical tests to strengthen the interpretive value of the data. Although Palmer and Sesé (2013:51) warn us that the statistical significance in this genre of study cannot be confused with practical relevance because of the unique nature of each case, the value of statistics lie in the fact that I am able to “generate multiple meanings” from the data, by exploring it both systematically and creatively (Gal & Ograjenšek, 2010:289).

Firstly, McNemar's test and chi-square testing were used for testing differences between two related groups. Created by Quinn McNemar, the McNemar test for 2x2 contingency tables was

originally published in a 1947 article in *Psychometrika* (McNemar's test, n.d.). This test provides valuable data in questions with yes/no options, especially when being combined with chi-square testing – the latter developed by Carl Pearson in 1900 (Franke, Ho & Christie, 2012:448). When data contained more than 2x2 fields, the Stuart-Maxwell test, which is referred to as an extension to McNemar's test, was used for testing similarities in variables. Lastly, the T-test for dependent samples dialogue and the Wilcoxon Matched pair test were also utilised. The latter was used to compare the different ratings of the statements given in question 17 of the questionnaire.

Finally, analysing section C of the questionnaire required additional investigation into the field of art therapy, and the methodology behind incorporating drawings in research. A study report on this topic is added below (2.5) for the sake of integrality.

## **2.5 Art therapy and incorporating drawings in qualitative research**

In 2012, Freer and Bennett conducted a study amongst university-level music students, asking the participants to draw images of themselves as they imagined themselves as music teachers five years into the future. This article intrigued me and led to the question of whether drawings might assist in gathering more data than mere textual answers. Below, the history of using art in psychotherapy will be discussed, before exploring existing research on incorporating art into research. Finally, the method of analysis used in this study is explored.

### **2.5.1 History of using art in psychotherapy**

Edwards (2004:19) states that “[t]hroughout time and across the globe, countless examples can be found of the use of visual arts in healing rituals”. The term “Art Therapy”, or the use of “different art media” in psychotherapy (“What is art therapy”, 2020a), was, however, first used in Britain in the late 1930's. Originally, art therapy was to be seen as an extension to the field of children's art (Waller, 1992:88), possibly because children (with a limited vocabulary) could communicate their feelings better through drawing or producing “art” (Guillemin, 2004:274). The use of different art forms in therapy has been said to have developed from the studies of Jung and Freud, both studying the influence of symbolism on therapy (Victor, 2007:12). To Freud, art was portrayed as a “*Vorstellungen*” (representation) or a “symptom (of its creator)” (Sharon-Zisser, 2018:3). Jung, on the other hand, believed that art does not possess any

conscious meaning, but that it is “something that simply ‘is’”. However, it has the ability to instinctively capture “coming changes” in one’s subconscious (Dilks, 2014).

In the 1940’s, art therapy was mainly used in two scenarios, namely art teaching and psychotherapy (“How did art therapy start”, 2020) and many of the first “art therapists” were also art teachers (Healy, 2012). After the Second World War, soldiers showing signs of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) were treated with a form of art therapy, with research reporting that painting and enjoying artwork helped these soldiers to “get to the root of the problem”, and even allowed them to recover well enough to return to active service (Lobban & Murphy, 2019:37). During the 1960’s and 1970’s, research posits that art therapists seem to rely on “intuition, respect for the image and empathy for the client, as opposed to relying on theory” (Gower, 2006:13). Although the practice of art therapy is viewed by many as primarily focusing on mental health, recent trends move that, by focusing holistically on a patient/client, the field might be much bigger than originally anticipated (Potash, Mann, Martinez, Roach & Wallace, 2016:120). Arrington (2001:143) agrees, stating that when a person is creating something (like drawing), an “altered state of consciousness” is created by a kinetic energy causing a fresh supply of oxygen entering the brain. In this moment, “negative feedback loops are stopped, reducing stress”. Seen in this light, art therapy could be beneficial to a vast majority of people, from children to the elderly. Seeing as the self-expressions that are paramount in art therapy are essential for emotional development (“What are the advantages of using Art in Therapy”, 2020), Gower (2006:30) is of the opinion that drawing can specifically help adolescents with identity formation, self-communication (2006:66) as well as a vast array of other problem areas. Scholars such as Megan Robb (2012:36) therefor posits that further research is needed to understand the full scope of where art therapy can be utilized in a trustworthy and valid manner.

Indeed, art therapists believe that most people can benefit from art therapy as an alternative form of communication, as it “offers an alternate medium to express, explore and work through thoughts, feelings and concerns” (“What is art therapy”, 2020b). In countries such as the United States of America (USA), many schools have now started to utilize art therapy in the school environment, due to the many benefits it offers, such as increasing of the self-esteem and self-confidence, prolonging attention span, reducing anxiety, improving social skills and more (Ramirez, 2013:21). Ramirez (2013) conducted a study on the influence of art therapy on male high school freshmen, and concluded that art therapy helped these boys develop coping mechanisms, as well as strengthen their learning experiences (2013:106). Bush (1997:4)



agrees, stating that art therapy can help to both better mental health, as well as “facilitate learning”.

In South Africa, art therapy is a relatively new field. Although it has been recognised by both the South African Medical and Dental Council as well as the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), no training is offered locally (“What is art therapy”, 2020a; “Art therapy in South Africa”, 2020). The Centre of Art Therapy in Johannesburg has been offering a “foundational course” in art therapy since 1997 (Gower, 2006:2); and in 2019, the University of Johannesburg (UJ) announced a new BA Honours degree in Art therapy, but state clearly that it is not possible to practise art therapy without a Master’s degree, which still needs to be completed overseas (Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture, 2020). Currently, there are only twelve registered art therapists practising in this country. However, with research suggesting that visual arts have the ability to “communicate across language and cultures” (Gower, 2006:29), it would seem that this field of therapy would be extremely well-suited for a country like South Africa, with its multi-cultural heritage. Also, Gower (2006:64) found that art therapy may have the ability to get to the source of a problem quicker; therefore it is preferable in South Africa, where many people do not have the means to pay for extended periods of therapy.

### **2.5.2 Incorporating drawings in qualitative research**

Although the practice of art therapy has been established in many countries around the world for more than 80 years, the validity of incorporating drawings, images or any form of visual representations into the field of research is a widely debated topic. According to Mäkelä, Nimkulrat and Heikkinen (2015:3), “the exploration of artistic and designerly methods of knowledge acquisition has only just begun to gain acceptance in other disciplines and professional communities of researchers...”. Many scholars, such as Prosser (quoted in Guillemin, 2004:272) are of the opinion that “images were a pleasant distraction to the real (i.e., word-orientated) work that constituted ‘proper’ research”. However, Goodnow (1977:11) is of the opinion that “a great deal of thinking and communicating takes place visually”, while Goldner, Sachar and Abir add that drawings could uncover feelings that are “too risky to ...state openly” (Goldner et al., 2018:26). Self-drawings, such as the one used in the questionnaire to this study, have been specifically singled out as an effective tool to express one’s feelings towards the self and the environment (Cockle, 1994:46). Furthermore, Mäkelä *et al* (2015) states that the value of drawings lies in the “access... to thinking that is close to the



unconscious” (2015:4). Therefore, drawings can be viewed as a specific account of how the artist perceives his/her world at the time of producing the drawing (Guillemin, 2004:275).

Although scholars like Pauwels (2011) states that, until recently, methods for interpreting visual data has been “reinvented over and over again, without gaining much methodological depth” (2011:1), the first standardized drawing test was developed almost a century ago (in 1926) by Florence Goodenough. She was interested in intelligence and the *Goodenough Draw-a-Man test* was originally used to measure cognitive levels and intelligence quotient (IQ) (Campbell & Bond, 2017:889). Dale Harris later revised the test, now known as the widely accepted *Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test* (2017:890). Over time, researchers studied and adapted the test to measure other elements of development, such as maturity (Loxton, Mostert & Moffatt, 2006), body-image (Woodburn, Fernández & Boschini, 1989) and self-esteem (Dey & Ghosh, 2016). It does seem, however, that no standard method for analysing and interpreting drawings exists as of yet. My aim was thus to identify the most agreed-upon variables when studying visual data, before discussing the three levels of analysing the research as explained by Goodnow (1977). These variables, discussed below, are (a) the role of social development, (b) family composition and the object of the self, and (c) current trends.

#### **a) The role of social development**

The first variable, as discussed by Hanes and Weisman (2008), is the role that social development plays in pre-adolescent drawings. Since drawing can be seen as a “social event”, the choice of hobbies, literature, peer relationships and other interests may have an impact on the nature of children’s drawings (2008:46 - 49). Children often choose to draw an image to capture or strengthen new information gained on subjects (Hanes & Weisman, 2000:8). In fact, when studying specific children’s drawings over time, one might discover certain themes, closely related to the child’s interests (Hanes & Weisman, 2008:46). It is therefore very important to view drawings holistically, and to learn of the artist’s perspective and thought processes before analysing their drawings. Obviously, with the format of my research being questionnaires, I can understand very little of the participants’ backgrounds, and will only be suggesting a few general symbols that might be coming from their drawings.

### **b) Family composition and the object of the self**

Self-objects can be classified as “external objects needed for the development of the self” (Kerr, 2014:636). This may refer to people (like family and peers), items (Hanes & Weisman, 2008:48) or important life events (Hanes & Weisman, 2000:8). Knowledge of the artist’s environment gives additional important information to analyse drawings. This may refer to the physical, or an imagined environment created for a specific cause (Hanes & Weisman, 2008:48). Once again, I will only be making non-specific deductions, being unfamiliar with each participant’s source of self-objects and environment.

### **c) Current trends**

Lastly, it is important to note elements of the current trends when analysing the content of drawings, especially in pre-adolescence and adolescence (Hanes & Weisman, 2008:49). This may refer to items such as clothing, television, gaming and other. For instance, a typical family in the 1950’s could be drawn with the father in a suit, mother with an apron, and all the kids well-groomed and in their place. If that same drawing should be presented in 2020, we might have questioned the stereotyping, and wonder if the artist could either be conditioned to certain traditions, or merely imitating an old television series.

### **2.5.3 Analysis of drawings<sup>4</sup>**

After taking all of the above into account (where possible), visual research can be analysed on three levels; namely, the (a) analysis of patterns, (b) attention to sequence, and the (c) study of equivalence (Goodnow, 1977:15). However, although a thorough knowledge of the above is crucial for the analysis of drawings in research, Farokhi and Hashemi (2011) urge researchers to firstly see drawings as a whole, and then to heavily rely on first impressions. They are quoted as to say that “[t]he integrated whole is larger than a total sum of its parts. This is called the ‘preeminence of the whole’” (2011:2222 - 2223). Only after studying the image in its totality, will the researcher successfully be able to proceed to focus on the finer detail that the three levels (discussed below) entail.

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<sup>4</sup> Refer to the complete publication of Goodnow (1977) for a more extensive explanation covering the analysis of drawings.

### a) Analysis of patterns

Firstly, Goodnow (1977:16) discusses the difficulty in determining which elements to identify as patterns and how these patterns can be compared. This is because of the fact that drawing can be a strong source of integrated learning as it requires connections “across as well as within symbol systems” (Parsons, 1998:110). One example in children’s drawings is to look at the spatial arrangement of the figures or objects in the image. For instance, not all children use the horizontal bottom of the page as a base line for starting the drawing (see figure 2.1). According to Piaget (in Goodnow, 1977:18) this stems from children not yet acquiring an “overall point of reference”, or transitivity (Wait, 2004b:135). They are able to see relations between singular items, but are not able to see multiple reference points to incorporate into the drawing. This observation, in turn, refers to a developmental phase described in psychology by Piaget as concrete operational (Piaget, 2008:44; Gilbert, 1998:357).



*Figure 2.1 Lack of horizontal baseline (Goodnow, 1977:17)*

The spatial arrangement of proximity is also interesting to note - an element that Mavers (2009:265) calls “framing”. This refers to the grouping of objects, and the space surrounding

them. The framing of the image becomes important when a participant (for example) draws an excessively large head (probably referring to an inflated ego), large eyes (suggesting the feeling of being watched) or a too long neck (implying a difficulty in reaching or achieving dreams) (Farokhi & Hashemi, 2011:2222). One must, however, be careful to over-analyse every discrepancy in an image. It would be easy to conclude, for instance, that the woman in figure 2.2 (below) has some kind of disability, explaining the very small arms. On a psychological level, we could also deduce that she feels weak or inadequate. However, it could be as simple as this: the woman's earrings are drawn very large – and therefore her arms have to be small, to avoid crossing lines (Goodnow: 1977:21). This statement is confirmed by the outcome of an investigation done by Goldner *et al.* (2018), where the conclusion was made that specific features identified on self-drawings made by 331 adolescents in central Israel could not be linked to rejection sensitivity or a negative self-image (2018:32).



**Figure 2.2 Avoiding crossing of lines (Goodnow, 1977:21)**

The relevance of the overall size of the image is discussed by Loxton (2004b:102). This can, again, refer to several conclusions, such as a high level of self-confidence, over-compensation for low self-image or even a lack of fine motoric skills. Generally speaking, small figures seem to correlate with shame, or a negative self-image; whereas exaggerated images tend to reflect a feeling of aggression or compensating for a weak sense of self (Goldner et al.: 2018:32;

Farokhi & Hashemi, 2011:2222). However, Hanes and Weisman (2000:7) suggests asking the child for an explanation of a drawing, to ultimately establish the connection between the linguistic and visual understanding.

### **b) Attention to sequence**

The second level, namely attention to sequence, refers to the arrangement of steps in the drawing. Normally, the artist would either start from the top (known as the top-down approach) or the bottom; and draw orderly (one arm after the other) or scattered. The relevance here is that the sequence gives important clues to understanding the drawing, often in the form of omissions (Goodnow, 1977:25). These are called “critical features” by Mavers (2009) and represent a selection of the elements deemed important by the child (2009:265). Dey and Ghosh (2016) explain that children with a high self-esteem take pride in presenting a drawing that reflects “effort and care” (2016:71). Studies confirm that detailed drawings, especially focussing on facial features, may be an indication of a balanced child with a positive self-image; whereas uncommon or abnormal features could be linked to children who experience “anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal” (Goldner et al., 2018:32). Furthermore, the shading of a part of the drawing is said to be associated with anxiety relating to that part (for instance, the body, or a specific place). Exaggerated shading will also contort the shape, which increases the visual representation of anxiety. Contrarily, if a drawing is done by using very faint lines, it may also point to a level of shame and depression, or a low “level of physical and mental energy” (Farokhi & Hashemi, 2011:2222).

### **c) Study of equivalence**

According to Piaget, children have certain skills that enable them to construct their own “intelligence” or views on particular subjects (Ensar, 2014:34). To evaluate the nature of a drawing against perceived reality is what Goodnow (1977:27) addresses as “equivalence”. She explains that we need to be aware of ambiguity in drawings and that one thing may represent another, according to the self-gained knowledge of a child. Lowenfeld and Brittain (1975:3) addresses this by saying, “The process of drawing, painting, or constructing is a complex one in which the child brings together diverse elements of his experience to make a new and meaningful one. When repeating an object, one could also notice the two objects differing in nature, if the child should wish to focus on new information.” This is referred to as a “shift in criterial detail” (Mavers, 2009:266). Guillemin (2004) adds that, in order to study equivalence,

it is important to not only analyse the drawing, but also the interpretation of the artist that is offered with the image (2004:287).

It is important to reiterate that this section is experimental in the context of music education. I hope to be able to prove the value of adding drawings to qualitative data instruments such as questionnaires, as the latter may provide too much structure to evoke the submission of personal experiences. However, if done without getting to know the participants (by conducting interviews), one must be extremely careful to not make any conclusions based on own biases, or a personal, singular view of an image. As stated before, patterns or sequences may present themselves for a number of reasons, which can only truly be explained by the participant himself. This tool must therefore be treated with the highest ethical values in mind, in order for the researcher to uphold the integrity of the findings to the study.

## **2.6 Ethics and trustworthiness**

According to Louw (2014:263), “ethics are your moral or professional code of conduct that sets a standard for your attitude and behaviour...In research, specifically, ethics are crucial, because they potentially affect all the stakeholders in research”. These stakeholders may include the participants, the “academic institution”, the community or public and, naturally, the integrity of the researcher as well. Being a teacher and mentor for many children, I regard this section of the research as very serious. Therefore, a detailed exploration of all the necessary ethical considerations (3.6.1) is discussed below, followed by an explanation of the trustworthiness of the research.

### **2.6.1 Ethical considerations**

The Research Ethics Committee (REC) of the University of Stellenbosch was established in 2013, in terms of the Policy for Responsible Research Conduct of Stellenbosch University. The REC’s document on their standard operating procedures (SOP) defines their role in research as to “safeguard the dignity, rights, safety, welfare and well-being of human participants in research, having due regard for the requirements of applicable professional bodies and academic societies, relevant regulatory agencies, applicable laws, and relevant institutional requirements” (REC, 2019:7). Ethics can be described as “the cornerstone of research” (Louw, 2014:273), because of the great responsibility to present truthful and honest data to all those involved. I realize the great responsibility in asking questions of a personal nature to underaged

children. This is a matter that cannot be entered into lightly. Therefore, I spent some time researching children's rights, and how to best approach this task to ensure that all the participants feel safe when completing the questionnaire.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child identifies four categories of children's rights, namely (i) the right to survive, (ii) the right to be safe, (iii) the right to belong, and (iv) the right to develop (Pillay, 2014:195). According to Pillay (2014:195) many researchers are, however, only concerned with the last right, (i.e. to develop), and disregard the other rights in the name of research. In order for the participants to feel safe and to belong, I informed them (through the headmasters and choir directors of the respective schools) of my intended study and asked for consent to visit their classes or choir rehearsals. Upon their agreement (see addendum F), I applied for and received consent from the Department of Education in the three provinces concerned (see addendum C), as well as the participants and their parents. The application for ethical clearance from the University of Stellenbosch's REC was then approved for the period 22 October 2018 – 21 October 2019 (project number MUS-2018-7670) (see addendum A).

To ensure that all of the participants' rights were considered, I did not force anyone to participate in the questionnaire, and I made sure that all the participants were aware of this. I started each session by introducing myself and giving a short overview of the research topic. I then continued to explain to everyone involved that participation is voluntary and that their names and schools will not be published anywhere, so they can be sure of complete confidentiality and anonymity. To be able to do this, every participant was assigned a number, which they had to fill in on the questionnaire. Upon finishing the second questionnaire, I was then able to compare the participants' two sets of answers, but that number could not be linked to a name, as I did not have access to the name lists. I have included all captured data in my findings, regardless of my own preconceptions, ideas or experiences, to avoid subjectivity.

The questionnaires were completed either in the boys' respective classes, choir rooms or communal gather places at schools (such as school halls). They were free to sit where they wanted while the atmosphere was also light and friendly. This was done to make the participants feel comfortable and at ease, in order for them to concentrate better on the task at hand. All the questions in the questionnaire were in English, but the participants were free to answer either in English or in Afrikaans. I saw many answers started in English, and then moved to Afrikaans, to better express feelings.



Throughout the study, I was sensitive to any possible harms and risks involved. According to Miles *et al.* (2014:61), harm can be defined as anything from “blows to the self-esteem or ‘looking bad’ to others, to threats to one’s interests, position, or advancement in the organization...up to being sued or arrested”. As stated above, I ensured that all participants could be certain of anonymity, and that no answers would be able to be traceable back to the writers. I was honest in my motives for the research, and I kept my promise about the safe storage of their confidential answers. All data is stored both in hard copy format in a secure cabinet of which only I hold the key; as well as on a password-protected flash drive. I therefore believe that the harm on the participants’ parts was minimal to none, and that they had more to gain from this experience, as they were the voices that I believe will help a nation’s vocal coaches and choral conductors to better understand what boys are going through during this uncertain time in their lives.

### **2.6.2 Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness is an umbrella term given in qualitative research to the terms “validity and reliability” (Koonin, 2014:258). This can then be distinguished as a combination of (i) credibility, (ii) transferability, (iii) dependability and (iv) confirmability. Firstly, the research is credible when data was captured and interpreted accurately. As stated earlier, the fact that I conducted two rounds of questionnaires will increase credibility, as I aimed to gain an even deeper understanding of the participants over the period of time. I believe that the research will be transferable to any school situation in South African middle-class schools, especially those schools that already have a choral culture in place, on which they wish to excel. The dependability of the research is determined by the integration between data collection and the analysis thereof (Koonin, 2014:259). I feel confident that my coding system will ensure that the research presented is entirely dependable. Finally, the collected data should always support (confirm) the findings of the researcher, in order for fellow scholars to be able to come to the same conclusions.

### **2.7 Possible shortcomings and limitations pertaining to this study**

This study wishes to provide a valuable starting point in conducting further in-depth studies in the South African context surrounding this phenomenon. I am aware of the vast array of schools in different environments, with different socio-economic backgrounds, cultures, languages, creeds *et cetera*. As this study was conducted with schools from a particular social class, the



findings cannot relate to schools in the first and second quintiles, as other factors for the lack of participation in music activities will occur (i.e. problems with transport after hours, schools not offering choir as an extra-mural *et cetera*). This definitely is a source for further study, and one that I would love to pursue in the future.

According to Milne (1999), the questionnaires used for primary data collection could present some disadvantages, such as the fact that participants may answer “superficially” or may lose interest and stop approaching questions with the necessary gravity (1999:52). This scenario could possibly have led to vague answers, especially since some people express themselves better verbally. In an ideal setting, I would have liked to follow up on these answers by asking for personal interviews. However, out of respect for the privacy of the minors involved (from an ethical viewpoint), as well as the geographical distance between myself and some of the schools used for the study, this was not possible.

As has been stated before, adding the drawing section to music pedagogical research is a new approach in South Africa. Art therapists, such as internationally trained art psychotherapist Samantha Davis, usually agree that the interpretation of the drawing is most reliable when the researcher is present when the drawing is done, in order to ask questions (S. Davis, personal communication, October 19, 2018; “Art therapy in general”, 2020). A therapy session would normally be divided into two parts, classified as the creative phase; and discussion phase (Gower, 2006:39). In the first phase, the client or patient would be alone with his thoughts and artwork. The second phase, however, consists of a discussion between the client or patient and the therapist, to relate feelings and other information that may have an influence on the artwork created (2006:37). Due to the participants’ rights of confidentiality and anonymity, this was not possible in this case. However, in order to better understand the context, as well as to ensure validity and reliability, I have asked participants to write down what they drew next to their pictures, so as not to jump to any conclusions without understanding their context or way of thinking.

Considering that the focused age group are adolescent boys, Gower (2006) posits that these boys would probably not provide their best effort if they believe they cannot draw, or do not like drawing (2006:70). Goldner et al. (2018:32) adds that there may well be a high percentage of adolescent boys who do not like drawing. Finally, choosing to obtain data from minors also proved challenging, as the number of parental consent forms that I received back was sufficient

to prove validity of this research, but below my first expectations. This will be explained further at the start of chapter 4.

Despite the challenges mentioned above, I believe that the findings emerging from the study will be significant, as they offer the South African perspective to this phenomenon which has, of yet, been missing from peer-reviewed research literature. A summary of existing publications will be presented in the next chapter (chapter 3), after which the chapters containing the findings (chapters 4 and 5) will follow.

## **CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE STUDY**

In 2016, I completed my studies towards an honours degree in education, specializing in Music Education. For my final research assignment, I had already reflected briefly on the topic of the “missing male phenomenon” in choral music as described by Freer (2010). Freer posits that the search for factors that influence the lack of participation in singing activities in adolescent<sup>5</sup> boys has been studied for many years, as teachers sought to understand this phenomenon (2010:18 – 19). At the dawning of my Master’s degree study, I started reading up on the phenomenon claimed by Freer (2010) in a more critical and comprehensive way. As a result, I identified six factors contributing to the absence of adolescent male choristers. These factors, which will briefly be discussed below, assisted as a starting point for this thesis.

### **3.1 Factors that influence the lack of participation in singing activities in high school boys**

Scholars like Warzecha (2013), Freer (2012 and 2014), Collins (2012) and Ashley (2013), to name but a few, discuss different reasons for boys’ lack of participation in choir singing. The reasons identified and discussed below are those that seem to have the most impact on recent studies. The topics covered are (2.1.1) boys’ full extra-curricular schedule, including the focus on sport, (2.1.2) the need for male role models, (2.1.3) the assumed feminine nature of singing, (2.1.4) inefficient teaching, (2.1.5) negativity surrounding voice change and (2.1.6) effective school leadership.

#### **3.1.1 Full extra-curricular schedules, including the focus on sport**

It is a widely recognised opinion that children presently are too busy (Brown, Nobiling, Teufel & Birch, 2011; Blum, 2004 etc.), with many hours after school, filled with extra classes, private

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<sup>5</sup> Boys, aged approximately 10 – 16 years, experience two developmental stages; namely, puberty and adolescence. Often mistaken to be the same thing, the difference is that puberty is described as the “physiological and anatomical processes that confer capabilities for sexual reproduction...” happening in a timeframe of 1 – 2 years; while adolescence is “a period of considerable neurobiological development and psychosocial adaptation”, starting at the same time as puberty. Adolescence can be divided into three stages, namely early adolescence (around puberty), middle adolescence (- 18 years) and late adolescence (- 21 years) (Thurman, 2012:10).

sports coaching and music lessons. Research in this regard suggests that if a child's schedule becomes difficult to manage and if he has to make a choice, he will select sports over singing. An early example of this is found in 1983, when Roe (1983:103) addressed this issue by saying that "boys will sing provided they are not asked to choose between choir and sport, an unfair choice that youngsters should not have to make".

During adolescence, boys often crave recognition; and while we are living in a society where muscles and masculinity are celebrated in sport, boys often report feeling "invisible" in the choir (Freer, 2012a:23). A participant in a research study done by Freer (2014) remarked: "Nobody pays attention to the singers in choir. They only notice the conductor. We're anonymous in the choir. But, I'm not anonymous on the rowing team, so that's why I prefer sporting activities" (Freer, 2014:23). Warzecha (2013:43) adds that the sporting culture of schools has a strong impact on the general negativity towards singing activities. Australian boys, for instance, that do not participate in sport are called "poofers" (Harrison, 2012:68). The fear of being victim to such name-calling could cause boys to choose sport over music. This observation is regrettable, as many scholars agree that music and sport "share a great deal in common" (Martin, 2008:135), with studies showing that the two disciplines can be mutually beneficial (Chtourou, Briki, Aloui, Driss, Souissi & Chaouachi, 2015:119). In fact, at institutions such as the Australian Institute for sport, close collaborations with music education facilities are common, in order to "share ideas" and empower "both sport coaching and artist development programmes" (Barrett, 2010:15).

Finally, the times of sports practises and choir rehearsals need to be mentioned as well. According to a study done by Freer (2016:83), the times of choir rehearsals and concerts frequently overlap with those of sports practises and game times. These conflicts naturally make it near to impossible for boys to participate in both choir and sports. A newsletter on the website of the Ridgefield High school's music department (in Connecticut, USA), states that "[C]onflicts with sport practises can give our music kids anxiety" (Conflicts with rehearsals, n.d.). Numerous other choir newsletters explain what to do in the case of conflicts between rehearsal times. However, the logic that, while there are many other boys in the same voice group, there is only one full back in the rugby team, or one goalie in hockey, will guide the choice of which activity should have preference. Many schools do not understand this, and even in giving these boys permission to attend music rehearsals, the sports coaches do not

realize that boys do not want to miss their practises, for fear of being left out of the team, or not having the minimum amount of field time.<sup>6</sup>

### **3.1.2 The need for male role models**

Several scholars agree that boys who have strong male role models, letting them discover music from a young age, may be more positively inclined towards music (Warzecha, 2013:47, Collins, 2012:101, Ashley, 2009:98). Waterman (1982:345) remarks that role models modelling a successful life will do wonders for the formation of “meaningful commitments”; while Ogden (1995:410) adds that modelling can be considered an “important determinant” of behaviour. Regarding singing, research done by Patrick Freer (2014:12) shows that almost every boy taking part in singing lessons can identify specific role models who had a positive influence towards his singing. This observation relates closely to the cognitive-developmental theory, as discussed by Bussey and Bandura (1999:677). Essentially, this theory explains that children base their ideas of gender on what they see and hear around them, and they will continue to imitate those gender-specific role models in order to establish their own gender identity.

These role models may either refer to a father figure and/or the choir conductor, but also to older boys, like seniors in a high school choir (Warzecha, 2013:44; Freer, 2014:2). In fact, research has commented on the fact that, while the influence of parents can be seen in “deep issues”, such as those of religion and vocation, adolescents tend to look to their peers for guidance in their everyday affairs (Steinberg & Cauffman, 1996:253). Scholars such as Reid and Duke (2015) studied the effect of peer learning and reported beneficial results, such as “positive effects on students’ achievement” and “reduce(ing) the workload of the teaching staff”. Furthermore, they also commented on the “development of generic skills related to future employment” being promoted by effective peer learning programmes (2015:223). It has to be noted, though, that sensitivity towards the influence of the peer group is said to peak at an average age of 14, decreasing throughout the senior years of high school (Steinberg & Cauffman, 1996:254).

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<sup>6</sup> The last two sentences of this paragraph is the view of this researcher. No additional sources could be found arguing the conundrum that this singular view of rehearsal conflicts creates.

### 3.1.3 The assumed feminine nature of singing

The third factor I identified as possible reason for boys' non-participation in choir is an assumed 'feminine' nature of singing among adolescents. This phenomenon was already identified by Winslow in 1946 (Harrison, 2007:269), and is still prevalent today. Warzecha (2013:44) remarks that it is interesting to note that languages with a grammatical gender like French, where nouns are classified as either male, female or neutral, call music "La Musique" – with "la" being the feminine definite article. Also refer to Spanish ("la Musica"), German ("die Musik"), Portugese ("a música") and other. Music is therefor either viewed as 'feminine' by both boys and girls (Freer 2014:18, Harrison, Welch, & Adler, 2012:4) or even, in extreme cases, portrayed as an expression of homosexuality (Abrahams 2012:80). Higher pitches, including singing, are specifically identified as being feminine (Warzecha, 2013:46, Eros, 2008:58). This association with femininity will obviously stand in sharp contrast to the increasing pressure on boys in the Western culture to act more masculine (Hall, 2005 in Warzecha 2013:48), when the whole definition of masculinity is explained as "standing opposed to anything feminine" (Powell, 2015:233).<sup>7</sup>

Referring to the existing studies about masculinity, the argument made about the perceived feminine nature of singing proves to be true, especially in a social setting and surrounded by a peer group. White and White (2001:40) remark "...though the young man may inwardly enjoy singing, when he sits with his buddies at school or at church, he will not sing if the group believes it is not masculine or 'cool'!" This singular viewpoint of masculinity as male identity causes an issue for boys singing in any form of choir, especially in a school setup, because of the feminine traits attributed to singing, such as expressing emotions (Powell, 2015:235). Whereas a masculine identity earns "respect, prestige, and the right to command" (Talbot, 2010:159), showing any signs of femininity is immediately viewed negatively, even branding such a boy as homosexual. Adolescent males involved in choral activities even endure "verbal

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<sup>7</sup> The confusion surrounding the terms "sex" (e.g. male versus female) and "gender" (e.g. masculinity versus femininity) must be mentioned. These two concepts are often believed to be synonyms of each other. However, Eros (2008:57) quotes O'Neill (1997) in explaining that the term "sex" should be used for "biological distinctions" between boys and girls; whereas "gender" refers to the "social traits and characteristics that are learned through a process of socialization". **The latter also includes the concept of identity (Brand, 2019:4).**

and physical harassment, bullying, (and) social isolation” (Hawkins, 2015:5). While boys’ egos are in a fragile state at adolescence, they would try at all costs to stick to the gender norms or “the socially acceptable construction of masculinity” (Powell, 2015:234). Abrahams (2012:82) remarks that it may be possible that boys facing this challenge could also be afraid of performativity, in other words that being called “gay” by peers might, in fact, lead to them being homosexual.

Many scholars agree that gender-based stereotypes, such as the scenario’s explained above, are a consequence of socialization (Jackson, 2007:61). Hence, a study done by Abeles (2009) hypothesized that movements such as women’s rights and the rise of feminism should lead to a decrease in said stereotypes. To test the hypothesis, articles where students had to assign gender associations to musical instruments over the last half century were evaluated. However, Abeles (2009) concluded that, although the range of instruments chosen by girls might be larger now than 50 years ago, the boys kept to the instruments that have been classified as “masculine” since the 1970’s, such as the drumkit and trombones (2009:135). Harrison (2007:267) takes it back even further, stating that men “are maintaining the same preferences for instruments as they did 100 years ago”. Gould (2004:67) confirms this, stating that “gender is inherent in all aspects of the music education profession”. As there is a “significant lack of study into singing as an ‘instrument’” (Harrison, 2007:269), it could be assumed that, based on the study above, boys will also judge the appropriateness of singing in the same way as a century ago.

A very interesting thought from a participant in another study by Freer (2009) was to say, “It’s an awful misconception, but when guys see a female teacher, they say, I guess chorus is just for girls” (2009:347). I believe that, at this point, some discussion should go into the need for male choir leaders for adolescent male choirs. A study done by Griswold and Chrobak (1981, mentioned in Van Weelden, 2003:21) stated that students majoring in music in the United States of America, arranging different music occupations according to gender and sex-appropriateness, classified choir conductors as feminine, while grouping orchestral conductors as masculine. Choral conductors at high school level in the United States of America (USA) also consists of twice as many females as males. An interesting view from Stohlmann (2018:18) states that historically, women were cheaper to hire, and did not have as many vocational choices as men – therefore many of them went into teaching. This meant that the majority of children came to know music and choir from female tuition – strengthening the feminine association.

It is worth noting, though, that not all types of singing are perceived as feminine. Musical theatre and rock music seem to be accepted more freely, possibly because the singing almost stands secondary to the drums and amplified guitars. The created image of a rock band, or the character described in musical theatre, is also much more masculine than, for instance, a school choir. Furthermore, rock music is supposed to be rebellious in nature, adding to the masculine identity (Powell, 2015:235). Unfortunately, as Adler (2012:52) remarks, this means that there are many boys dreaming about being the next pop or rock star, while very few are willing to work hard and master the proper techniques required for singing.

### **3.1.4 Inefficient teaching**

During the uncertain time of voice change, boys will conventionally seek guidance from their teachers. However, it seems that music teachers and choir conductors often have limited understanding of the boys' voice change (Ashley 2013a:313, Swanson, 1960:50) and little to no attention is given to how to accompany a boy during this phase in his life (Freer, 2012a:23; Ashley, 2011:5). Eastman (1929) is quoted as writing, "[I]t is an unfortunate fact that the majority of those entrusted with the training of young singers, such as church organists, school teachers, &c., have little knowledge of voice-production" (1929:840). The many existing strategies of "voice change pedagogy" (Brand, 2019:5) taught to new educators can also be confusing, as no single theory has succeeded in answering all the questions that teachers have in this regard (Fisher, 2009:37). This confusion is ultimately decreasing the number of boys who are willing to participate in school-based musical activities (McLeod, 1932, in Fisher, 2009:40). It is with this dilemma in mind that Holley (2009) writes:

"I am not saying that primary teachers are failing, they mostly don't know what to do with boys when their voices change. But to get a teenage boy back who has been told that he can't sing is nigh on impossible" (Holley, 2009, in Harrison, 2012:70).

#### ***2.1.4.1 Scholarly views on the changing voice***

Fisher (2009) agrees that "many of our middle school choir teachers prove inept in handling the complexities and curiosities of the male voice change" and campaigns for better teacher training, "based on reliable research" (2009:47). As the voice change process has been well documented by numerous scholars, including Van Heerden (2000), White and White (2001),



Ashley (2009), Thurman (2012), and quite recently Kritzinger (2019), I decided to merely include a brief discussion on some of the researchers most frequently quoted in this field of expertise, namely English voice teacher (a) Duncan McKenzie, and Americans (b) Frederick Swanson, (c) John Cooksey, and (d) Irvin Cooper (Kritzinger, 2019:2). I have also added the views of German professor (e) Michael Fuchs, known for his exploratory research in predicting the onset of the voice change, in order to present a European perspective as complementary counterpoint.<sup>8</sup>

#### **a) Duncan McKenzie**

Duncan McKenzie was the first scholar to publish a “practical guide to training the adolescent boys’ voice” (Fisher, 2009:41). Titled *Training the Boy’s changing Voice* (1956), McKenzie advocated an “alto-tenor plan”, by suggesting that boys are moved to the “next lower classification” (or voice group) when any strain is experienced by the singer in his top range (McKenzie, 1956:29). This suggestion was made due to observed negativity in boys with changing, or recently changed voices, when high notes are not accessible like before (McKenzie, 1956:38). He also proposed that the speaking voice is the “most reliable predictor of the voice change” (Fisher, 2009:41).

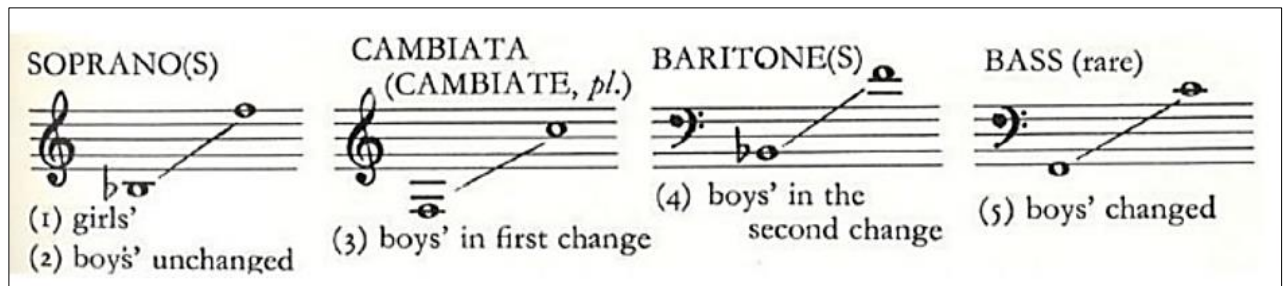
#### **b) Irvin Cooper**

While originally from the UK, Irvin Cooper (1900 – 1971) is largely associated with his years at the Florida State University, where he, as a contemporary and friend of John Cooksey (discussed below), lectured from 1950 – 1970 (Stockton, 2015:11). Amongst other publications, he is well-known for his book “Teaching Junior High School Music” (Fisher, 2009:43). He also composed songs with a comfortable range for boys to sing, advocating that “no attempt should be made to make the voice fit already existing music. The music should be made to fit the voice” (Stockton, 2015:78).

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<sup>8</sup> Although this thesis is primarily concerned with the psychological effect of voice change, I strongly agree with Van Heerden (2000:10) when he says that a voice teacher or choral conductor needs to be knowledgeable about the anatomical and physiological aspects of the voice, in order to identify and correct vocal mistakes.

Cooper developed the *Cambiata* system (from *nota cambiata*, meaning changing note) (Stockton, 2015:78, Fisher, 2009:43) to show average ranges that boys should sing during the process of change. Although similar to McKenzie's alto-tenor plan, Cooper explains that the range of the Cambiata system is larger (Fisher, 2009:43). Cooper distinguishes between four voice groups; namely, soprano (unchanged voice), cambiata (first change), baritones (second change) and bass (changed voice) (Stockton, 2015:80). The range that he advises for each voice group (figure 2.1) is indicated below:



**Figure 3.1** Cooper's advised ranges for each voice group (Stockton, 2015:80)

### c) Frederick Swanson

Frederick Swanson, former director of the Moline Boys' Choir in Illinois (Barham & Nelson, 1991:6) is known as a pioneer in the field of scientifically examining the process of voice change. During his research, he discovered that the start of voice change could be predicted by the different phases of the physical male sexual development – especially the presence of pubic hair. He also contributed to various publications, including authoring two books, namely “The Male Singing Voice Ages Eight to Eighteen” and “Music Teaching in the Junior High and Middle School” (Fisher, 2009:44).

Unlike McKenzie and Cooper, who both believed that voice change was nearly always a gradual and easily recognisable occurrence (Fisher, 2009:44), Swanson is of the opinion that “the voice change, if not anticipated with special vocal training, may be characterized by a rather sudden, radical change”. Furthermore, he stated that voice change may coincide with the time that music becomes an elective subject, from being a compulsory subject in the curriculum of the lower grades. This means that many boys, struggling with new ranges and feeling self-conscious about their new voices, will opt out of singing classes if the teacher cannot provide proper guidance during this time (Swanson, 1984:47). He consequently advocated for regular

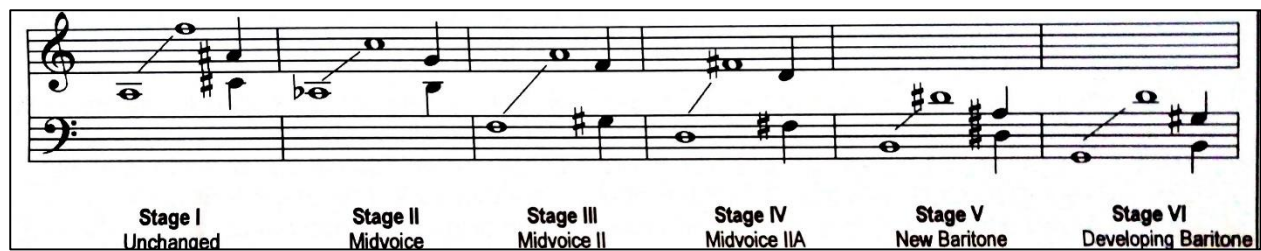
checks of boys' ranges (Freer, 2008:44) as well as giving thorough explanations on voice change and using forms of positive reinforcement to inspire the boys to look forward to their "new voice" (Swanson, 1961:64).

#### **d) John Cooksey**

John M. Cooksey is a former professor in Music at the Universities of Memphis and Utah, retiring in 2006. After receiving a scholarship to attend the Florida State University, he became interested in the male changing voice, something that would essentially become his life's work (Hale, 2009:85 – 86). He posits that voice change is a predictable occurrence, measured by certain indicators, such as "pitch range, tessitura, vocal quality, register development and mean speaking voice frequency" (Fisher, 2009:45).

Cooksey categorized the physical process associated with voice change into "five landmark stages" (Cooksey, 1997b:823), namely, early mutation (at approximately age 12 – 13), high mutation (about a year after the onset of voice change), mutation climax (18 – 24 months after onset), stabilizing post-mutation (24+ months after onset) and developing post-mutation (around a boy's grade 9 year). These phases, commonly known as "growth spurts" of the vocal muscles, cartilages, ligaments and other tissue, are perceived by Cooksey (1997b) as predictable, although the timing and duration of each phase differs from person to person (1997b:833). The different stages can be distinguished by what he refers to as "landmarks", such as a breathier voice during early mutation (Van Heerden: 2000:57), the Adam's Apple becoming more prominent and angled during high mutation (Cooksey, 1997b:836; Thurman, 2012:16) and the vocal folds being susceptible to swelling, leading to inflammation and hoarseness during the mutation climax stage. The upper range of the singing voice can also become "unstable" during this phase; although qualities of the emerging adult voice can be audible in the lower ranges (Cooksey, 1997b:836 – 837, Van Heerden: 2000:57).

Much like McKenzie and Cooper, Cooksey also distinguished between five vocal stages, namely, Midvoice I, Midvoice II, Midvoice IIA, Newvoice (formerly: New Baritone) and Emerging Adult (formerly: Settling Baritone) (Fisher, 2009:45). The respective ranges are indicated below (see figure 3.2), with the average tessituras added as crotchets.



**Figure 3.2** *Cooksey's Stages of the Boy's changing Voice (Freer, 2012b)*

According to Cooksey (1997b), boys can be very self-aware of their voices during the period of voice change, due to the abrupt changes in pitch (known as vocal cracks) that may be experienced. This phenomenon, mostly perceived during the mutation climax phase, is caused by the communication between the brain and the larynx flashing back to a habitual, pre-mutational stage, and is especially prone to happen when the boy is excited or emotional (1997b:828).

#### **e) Michael Fuchs**

Michael Fuchs is Head of the Phoniatics and Audiology department, as well as the Cochlear implant centre at the University Hospital in Leipzig, Germany. Furthermore, he was trained as a chorister and classical singer, and is currently a lecturer at the University for Music and Theatre in Leipzig. Fuchs' research interests are predominantly voice disorders and the process of voice change (Hochschule für Musik und Theater, n.d.).

According to Fuchs, Fröhlich, Hentschel, Stuermer, Kruse, and Knauff (2007:170), the process of voice change can be divided into three phases, namely "premutation", "mutation" and "postmutation" (2007:170). With the aid of the Goettingen Hoarseness Diagram (GHD), they established that it is possible to predict the onset of voice change, through "acoustic analysis of the speaking voice" (2007:174 - 175). The GHD is a diagram that enables "quantitative two-dimensional description and graphical representation of voice characteristics on the basis of four acoustic measures. These measures are "jitter, shimmer, mean period correlation [and] glottal-to-noise excitation rate" (Fröhlich, Michaelis, Strube & Kruse, 2000:708). Fuchs *et al* (2007) found that the average fundamental frequency already descends during the premutation phase, about six months before the onset of mutation. During this stage, the difference in frequency is still inaudible to human ears (2007:177).

Any teacher working with boys' changing voices should be well-educated in all the didactical aspects of singing (Van Heerden, 2000:9). I have therefore divided the knowledge required that relates to this research into five categories; namely, cognitive development (3.1.4.1), physiological changes (3.1.4.2), social and psychological changes (3.1.4.3) guidance through the process as a whole (3.1.4.4) and, finally, the ongoing debate on whether to rest the changing voice (3.1.4.5).

#### ***3.1.4.2 Aspects of cognitive development***

A human brain will undergo substantial changes during adolescence. The frontal cortex, responsible for logic, is still developing during this time, explaining why many decisions made by adolescents are based on emotion (formed by the early matured amygdala), rather than rational thoughts (Physical Development During Adolescence, n.d.). However, as adolescents start making their own decisions more frequently, the level of cognitive development will ultimately depend on what they choose to spend their time on (Del Boca, Monfardini & Nicoletti, 2012:5).

According to Choudhury, Blakemore and Charman (2006:166), the volume of grey matter (GM), which increased during childhood, will decrease during adolescence. The GM, located in the frontal lobes and on the outer layer of the brain, is responsible for “muscular and sensory activity”. Simultaneously, the prefrontal cortex (PFC) and parietal cortex white matter (WM) will increase from the start of the pubertal process. The WM acts like “the subway of the brain” in allowing different signals to travel faster (MacKenzie, 2019). In the context of singing, this means that adolescents' capacity for acquiring new information lessens, emphasizing the activity of “strengthening pre-existing knowledge”. Consequently, boys who stop singing when their voices are changing could lose “many of the musical abilities they gained in childhood” (Freer, 2012b).

#### ***3.1.4.3 Aspects of physiological changes***

Voice change is part of much bigger changes occurring in a boy's body, known as puberty. In short, the onset of puberty is initiated by the hypothalamus (located at the base of the brain) releasing something called gonadotropin-releasing hormones (GnRH). GnRH triggers the pituitary gland (a small pea-size gland in the base of the skull) to release hormones and growth factors, such as luteinizing hormones (LH) and follicle stimulating hormones (FSH),

responsible for the production of sperm and testosterone. It is the release of testosterone that facilitates the physical changes that a boy goes through during adolescence; for example, the increase in weight and muscle mass, the presence of facial and pubic hair and voice change (Thurman, 2012:15). This process is unique in timing of onset and duration for every adolescent, but usually occurs between the ages of 10 – 14 (Cooksey, 1997b:823).

It is a well-known and widely documented fact that boys' voices "break" (in layman's terms), or go through a period of change when they reach puberty. The first misconception that should be cleared straight away is the poor word choice "voice break", as we have come to know it. Cooksey (1997a:719) states that the difficulty of understanding the physiology will become quite less demanding if it is understood that "a boy's voice never breaks", as nothing in the physical process even remotely implicates something breaking. Moreover, the negative description of "broken voices" "kills interest in lifelong singing" (Cooksey, 1997b:828), due to the image of something whole (beautiful) that has been broken (shattered).

Ashley (2009:42) described voice change as follows:

"The speaking centre of a boy's voice falls steadily as he grows. At the most basic level, this is because the vocal mechanism, which includes the larynx and vocal folds and the main resonators, the pharynx and oral cavity, grow as the rest of the body grows. Thus, as the boy increases in height, his vocal folds increase in length and his resonating cavities increase in volume."

This period of voice change, or "mutation", can be described as a time of "decreased vocal efficiency", due to the enlargement of the larynx and vocal folds (Fuchs, et al, 2007:169). The perceivable changes surrounding voice change are the lengthening of the neck and growth of the resonance cavities (White & White, 2001:39 - 40); as well as the larynx doubling in dimensions, the cartilage surrounding the vocal chords forming a 90° angle (versus 120° before the onset of adolescence) and the thickening and lengthening of the vocal chords. These growth factors result in a breathy sound colour and cracks in the speaking voice, either an octave down into chest register, or an octave up into head voice (Van Heerden, 2000:56).

#### ***3.1.4.4 Social and psychological changes***

The term “psychosocial”, which combines the social and psychological fields, is defined as the “interplay between the biological, physiological, emotional, cognitive, social, environmental and maturational factors” (Sinha & Modi, 2014:409). Teachers need to understand that adolescents will evaluate themselves constantly, as their self-images are changing. This self-awareness may quickly lead to self-consciousness, manifesting with behaviour such as “irritability, anger, emotional instability, depression, awkwardness in interpersonal interaction, and varied levels of self-esteem (2014:410). In this regard, Wang, Tomlinson and Noe (2010) suggest a mentorship approach, explaining that mentors are expected to impart three levels of support, namely (a) “psychosocial support”, (b) “career-related support” and (c) “role modelling” (2010:358).

##### **a) Psychosocial support**

Freer & Evans (2018:889) states that when adolescents’ psychological needs are met, they are more likely to show positive behaviour – especially in the educational context. The concept of mentorship is often described as being a “parent-like figure” (Hunt & Michael, 1983:477). Referring to the context of music, Edwin (1997) supports the idea of vocal parenting, a pedagogical mentoring approach where the vocal coach is seen as a parental figure, carrying great responsibility (1997:136). Edwin (2014) states that a vocal parent, as opposed to “just a teacher”, will approach lessons holistically, starting with the mind of the singer, as this is where the act of singing starts (2014:343). He also stresses the importance of a positive attitude in singing, especially in creating a sound vocal technique. Someone with a well-nurtured self-confidence will, for instance, stand with a much better singing posture (straight, shoulders back, *et cetera*) than someone with a negative self-image (Edwin, 1997:135). Furthermore, he advocates the storytelling technique to create positive environments and, at the same time, exercise the ability to role-play a certain character or scenes (Edwin, 2014:342). Edwin posits that the period of voice change is the “most rewarding” time for vocal parents, as they can really journey through this process with the adolescent (2014:343).



## **b) Career-related support**

In the professional or working environment, mentorship has been proven to help in identifying “managerial talent” and in incorporating both career and personal responsibilities (Hunt & Michael, 1983:478). In a school setup, “workplace-based mentorship” is normally used to link the learners’ schoolwork to future careers, by means of travelling to local businesses, and hosting masterclasses given by young successful businessmen (Caliento, 2016). An example of career-based mentorship can be found in the United States of America’s “career academy”, a formalized mentorship programme ensuring successful retention of high school students to go into the work force (National Mentoring Resource Centre, n.d.). Edwin (2014:342) concurs, encouraging vocal parents to get to know their students’ “hopes and dreams”.

## **c) Role modelling**

The principle of role modelling has already been discussed under the second identified motivation for adolescent boys’ participation in musical activities; namely, the need for male role models (2.1.2). It is said to be a common psychosocial function associated with mentorship, whether it is done consciously or subconsciously (Picariello & Waller, 2016:7).

### ***3.1.4.5 Holistic guidance through adolescence***

In becoming involved in all the aspects of the adolescent’s life (as a vocal parent), proper guidance can be given on numerous levels. However, Elorriaga (2011) campaigns the importance of making long-term commitments towards their students. During a very uncertain time in boys’ lives, a sense of continuity could benefit towards building a positive self-esteem, and therefore aid in positive identity formation (2011:320).

Wang *et al.* (2010) stress that trust is a necessary factor in forming effective interpersonal relationships, such as mentorship programmes (both formal and informal) (2010:359). Trust, in this context, can be defined as “to believe that someone is good and honest and will not harm you; or that something is safe and reliable”; while also “to have confidence in something, or to believe in someone” (Cambridge online dictionary, 2020). Trust between the mentor and mentee or, in this case, vocal parent and student, will result in a higher level of cooperation and better work attitude (Schilke & Huang, 2018:1181), if it is possible to understand how trust is formed and developed. Wang *et al.* (2010) state that two types of trust; namely, “affect- and



cognition-based trust”, can be distinguished (2010:359). Affect-based trust is explained as “the emotional bonds between a trustor and a trustee” (Cheung, Gong, Wang, Zhou & Shi, 2016:1509); while cognition-based trust relies on a display of rational trustworthy characteristics, such as dependability and accountability (Son, Kim & Kim, 2014:14). While both affect- and cognition-based trust is necessary for optimal relational growth, Wang *et al.* (2010) posits that the majority of relationships will start on a cognition-based level. Mentors, or, in this case, vocal parents, must therefore strive to model trustworthy behaviour in order to win the student’s trust (2010:363).

#### ***3.1.4.6 The debate on “resting the voice”***

The tradition of “resting the voice” has been taught to generations of vocal coaches, a practice believed to have been started by the inventor of the first mirror laryngoscope, Manuel Garcia (1805 – 1906) (Ashley, 2013a:4). Garcia (in Fisher, 2009) is quoted as to say:

“During this time of crisis, it is necessary to let nature, the only dispenser of individual powers, act... If one impoverishes the vocal organ by the practice of singing, or by any excesses whatsoever, one exhausts the plant before it is fit to give fruit; one causes decay to succeed childhood” (Fisher, 2009:38).

This practice has been extremely popular in Europe. The Vienna Boys’ Choir, for example, had members singing in their top registers until their voices “began to break” (2009:38), with no prospect of further training in choral singing. Other scholars, such as Emil Behnke and Lennox Browne, published a book titled “The Child’s Voice: Its Treatment with Regards to After-Development”, in which they claimed to prove that voice training during mutation could have dangerous and negative consequences (2009:39). In “The Gentle Art of Singing”, author Henry Wood also campaigned for a two- to three-year resting period when voices are changing (2009:40).

However, some scholars believed that Garcia’s theory was mostly built on “personal opinion and experience” (Fisher, 2009:46) and opposition to this viewpoint came to the fore. Initially, laryngologist Sir Morrell McKenzie (1837 – 1892) stated that there is no danger in voice training during voice change, if done efficiently (Cooksey, 1997b:832). In the foreword to Robert McLeod’s 1932 publication titled “A Heritage of Song: A Song Book for Adolescent Boys”, he mentions the decreased vocal quality of male British singers, owing to the neglect of proper vocal training during voice change (Fisher, 2009:40 – 41).

Leck (2009:52) shares this so-called “modern” opinion, strongly suggesting that “not only should boys sing, but this is the time they need to sing the most”. He adds that learners who stop singing during voice change are exposed to the risk of their voices becoming uncontrollable (2009:53), an experience that would strengthen the idea of a “broken voice”. Ironically enough, this term is believed to have been campaigned by Garcia himself to substantiate his methodology of resting the voice (Fisher, 2009:38). Subsequently, if the boy struggles with singing after resting his voice during voice change, he will probably opt for another activity that comes more naturally now, or something that he has not been chased away from before (Adler, 2012:55).

According to Fisher (2009), while this debate still surfaces in the UK, vocal teachers in the USA tend to focus on teaching techniques to follow during voice change, rather than debating on whether to sing during this time (2009:42). This means that voice teachers and choir conductors must be educated and equipped to guide adolescent males through voice change (Cooksey, 1997b:833). Committee members from the 1930 Music Supervisors National Conference already campaigned for vocal teachers to be “voice specialists”, instead of mere trained singers (Fisher, 2009:43). Additionally, “[c]hoir directors must remember they are responsible for the vocal health of every member of their choirs” (Sipley, 1993:29). As this is a very serious task to fulfil, teachers have to be flexible, in order to be able to meet students’ needs on different levels (Nockin, 2013:125). However, they also need to be cognitive about the fact that adolescents are “less likely to seek help for their concerns compared to adults,” (Van den Toren, Van Grieken, Lugtenberg, Boelens & Raat, 2019:191), because of insecurities and various degrees of negativity, as discussed below.

### **3.1.5 Negativity surrounding voice change**

During voice change, boys may experience times when their voices become uncontrollable (Ashley, 2013a:312). Studies show that this process is often associated with a “drop in self-esteem levels in adolescent males” (Hyde, 2005:590, Stupple, 2007:36), leading to shyness (Warzecha 2013:43; Ashley 2013a:312), low self-image (Freer, 2012a:20, White & White, 2001:40) and even a loss of identity (Freer 2014:19). According to Williamson (2018), the “physiological and psychological changes can cause a lack of motivation amongst male adolescents to sing” (2018:1). Therefore, choir directors working with adolescents should have a thorough knowledge of the emotional fluctuations that a boy encounters when going through voice change (Dilworth, 2013:7). Ashley (2013b) adds that this perceived negativity may start

in primary school already, as there is a definite trend in boys' having to deal with voice change earlier than in the past. The average age identified as the starting point for voice changed has been observed as approximately 12 - 12.5 years (2013b:5 - 12). This means that the boys would most probably not be able to sing choir in their grade 7-year, as the majority of primary school choirs consist only of soprano and alto voices. These boys will then be lost to high school choirs, as all the findings point to the fact that when a boy's singing career is interrupted while his voice is changing, it is very difficult to persuade him to return to singing (Freer, 2012b).

Conductors should also be sensitive to the fact that this self-consciousness may influence adolescents' need for social approval (Steinberg & Cauffman, 1996:255). Studies have found that the concept of feeling valued is a core need during adolescence (Myers, Willsen and Villalba 2011:34), leading to a better self-esteem (Paradis, Giaconia, Reinhertz, Beardslee, Ward & Fitzmaurice, 2011:35). Articles offering different strategies of how to encourage adolescents to realize their value have been widely published. McNeely and Barber (2010), for instance, provide "[m]ultiple theoretical perspectives" on these methods of validation. Some of these perspectives include attachment theory (expressing love through "affection and caring"), symbolic interaction theory (internalizing views that others have of oneself) and the social learning theory, closely related to the concept of role models (2010:603 – 604). Drolet and Arcand (2013) add the "positive social development theoretical approach", explaining adolescents should be "viewed from the angle of their potential, motivation and aspirations", in order for them to realize their value (2013:30).

Regardless of which strategy, or combination of strategies is used, scholars agree that relationship-building is the primary key to creating a feeling of belonging for adolescents (Roeser, Midgley & Urdan, 1996:411). It is important to remember that these boys, although appearing strong on the outside, are often masking great vulnerability, due to nervousness about their speaking or singing voices (Ashley, 2009:146 – 149). As singing is also a "nurturing process" voice teachers and choir conductors should care for their students' mental health (Edwin, 1997:135 - 137), thereby recognising signs of general negativity, before these feelings expand and cause a state of depression (Teasdale, 1983:23).

### **3.1.6 Effective school leadership**

Headmasters play a cardinal role in creating the culture of a school, and therefore in the success (or failure) of singing activities (Harrison, 2012:73). It is interesting to note that music teachers

seldom experience the pressure from management to perform in a school setup in the same way as, for example, the mathematics department would, as music education is not considered one of the integral subjects that school success is based on. Therefore, music teachers are much less likely to embark on further studies or refreshment courses and can stagnate in old and outdated thought patterns (Ashley, 2011:6). As most of the experts agree that the process of teaching is still actively changing and reforming (James, 2015:6). This stagnation will result in a further lack of interest and enthusiasm towards music and musical activities.

Collins (2012) explains that

“[t]here is a profound difference between a school culture that provides *opportunities* for boys to be involved in arts activities and a school culture that *supports* arts activities. Support is both providing the opportunities and positively discriminating towards musical activities” (2012:105).

So, ultimately, it seems from studying the research that the current schooling system could be failing these boys as they go through an emotional and physical trying time. A 1997-study conducted by Killian resulted in eight times more negative comments than positive ones, when 141 participants (boys and men; singers and non-singers) were asked to describe the period of voice change (Killian, 1997:529). I have always been interested in finding out whether these theories are applicable to a South African context. Being a music teacher at an all boys’ school, I discussed some of the ideas in my grade 9 music class. The boys shared many experiences of being sent out of choir rehearsals when their voices changed – leading them to believe that they cannot sing anymore. Listening to their stories and evaluating the literature, it became clear that well-educated teachers play a vital role in addressing all of the factors discussed above. All of these factors, in exchange, contribute to the so-called “missing male phenomenon” as described by Patrick Freer in the majority of his articles (2010, 2012, etc.).

The main focus of this research will thus be on the adolescent boy’s self-image, in relation to his changing voice, as well as the role that a school teacher or school choir conductor plays in the process of male identity shaping during the voice change. In addition, I would like to find out how the conductor/teacher influences the male learner’s perception about choir singing during (and after) this process.

The remainder of this chapter will thus be devoted to the two factors identified above. Firstly, the idea of the self-image will be discussed (2.2), combined with an exploration of the possible

selves theory. This section will also include a short description of different masculinities, as the concept of masculinity also relates closely with the possible selves theory (Lips, 2007:52). Thereafter, the various roles of the singing teacher and/or choir conductor will be considered and examined, before concluding with a brief summary of the literature that has been reviewed.

### **3.2. Self-image, including different masculinities and the possible selves framework**

The term adolescent is derived from the Latin *adolescere*, a verb that means “to grow to maturity” (Eliot, 2009:10). From this definition it is clear that the whole nature and purpose of adolescence is one of change. According to the psychologist Eric Erikson, individuals are challenged with a specific developmental task during every phase of the maturing process. During adolescence, this task is said to be the shaping of an own identity (Louw, 1998:487). Erikson (1963, 1968, quoted in Waterman, 1982) explains the concept of identity formation as a feeling of “progressive continuity” between the current self, and the potential self of the future (1982:341). This identity can be healthy, or unhealthy, depending on the different social roles that adolescents take on and adapt as part of their self-concepts (Karr, Bauer, Graham, Larson & Neumark-Sztainer, 2014:135). Healthy identities are characterized by gaining an own value system and discovering one’s purpose in life (Bronk, 2011:33) whereas unhealthy identities include negativity and low self-worth, or the acceptance of someone else’s identity (for example that of the parents) without questioning it (Louw, 1998:488).

Each aspect of the adolescent’s identity needs to be questioned and evaluated to figure out if and where it fits into his or her life going forward into adulthood. These aspects include “moral, ethnic, religious, political and sexual” beliefs (Bronk, 2011:32), or what was summarized by Waterman (1982:341) as finding a comprehensible and acceptable definition of one’s unique self and identifying and prioritizing commitments for the future. For girls, this search for the inner identity and self-worth is based strongly on “feeling involved in relationships”, whereas the majority of boys want to rather establish their independence during this time (Lacombe & Gay, 1998:796). The search for this identity, which is also the way into adulthood as it rarely occurs before the age of 18 years (Steinberg & Cauffman, 1996:255), happens in “progressive developmental shifts” which can also be referred to as identity crises. According to Waterman (1982) homogeneous communities are less likely to force adolescents into an identity crisis because of the pressure to conform to the examples set for them. However, this is not necessarily a positive observation, as the majority of young people who do not face an identity

crisis (classified as “foreclosure”) will merely try to satisfy the rules and hopes of their parents and other authority figures (Waterman, 1982:342 - 345).

The developmental phase of adolescence, with all its physical and cognitive changes, is labelled the *Sturm und Drang*<sup>9</sup> (storm and urge) phase by psychologists like Hall and Freud, owing to the heightened emotionality that this era brings along (Louw, 1998:476). Embarrassment due to the clumsiness that asynchronical growth brings about is common during this phase, as is the feeling that nobody understands them and that their feelings are unique. Duke, Balzer and Steinbeck, (2014:319) suggest that these thoughts and feelings, giving way to the construct of adolescence egocentrism as defined by Elkind (1967), could be triggered by the rate or speed of testosterone fluctuations in the body. This egocentrism consists of two concepts; namely, the imaginary audience and the personal fable (Meyer, 2004:156; Schwartz, Maynard & Uzelac, 2008:441). The theory of the imaginary audience posits that adolescents feel as if all eyes are on them, or as if they are the focal point in a conversation (Ryan & Kuczkowski, 1994:219), while the latter, the personal fable, refers to intense feelings, and the idea that their circumstances and emotions are unique (Alberts, Elkind & Ginsberg, 2007:72). Especially boys that develop later than their peers are documented to experience emotional stress, leading to a low self-esteem and isolation (Meyer, 2004:54). Fuelled by the sense of being untouchable, many teenagers may even show signs of high-risk behaviour, such as drug or alcohol use or unprotected sexual activity (Louw, 1998:482).

While adolescent boys are on this journey of change, not many of them are knowledgeable about either the physical and emotional development, or how to handle these processes. It is very important to note that many boys themselves do not know anything about the process of voice change (Freer, 2016:79). If they do not have specific role models or teachers who care enough to guide them through this time in their lives, the majority are left to deal with this process without any knowledge. I also could not find a single public-school curriculum in South Africa that covers voice change as a topic. The only place it is mentioned at all is in the grade 7 Life Orientation book, where a table lists all the bodily changes during puberty. The extent of knowledge is limited to the sentence “stem raak dieper (13 - 14 jaar), maar slaan dikwels hoog deur terwyl dit ‘breek’” (voice becomes deeper (13 - 14 years), but frequently pitches higher while it ‘breaks’) (Clithercoe, Dilley, Naidoo, Perez & Pickering, 2013:15).

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<sup>9</sup> Not to be confused with the *Sturm und Drang* trend in 18<sup>th</sup> century German literature.

This lack of information means that many boys are left to work out how to handle this phase by themselves. As boys in our Western society are pressured to exhibit masculinity (discussed below) as part of their identity (as stated earlier), they will probably model their coping mechanisms on the masculinity with which they can most freely identify.

### 3.2.1 The concept of masculinity

The subject of masculinity has gained a great deal of interest over the last forty years. Originally studied as a subsidiary in the field of feminism, the search for defining and grouping different masculinities has proven to be a very difficult task in South Africa because of the various cultures that our country pride ourselves in (Conway, 2001:101). Although the model of hegemonic masculinity (meaning “the most honoured or desired” form, according to Connell, 2000:10) is often used in local gender-related research, Morrell (1994, 1998, 2001) proposed that no singular concept of hegemonic masculinity would be able to represent all the different ethnicities and cultures in South Africa. Furthermore, the boundaries of a singular definition of masculinity has been stretched to its limits and many scholars have presented new theories towards the “restructuring” of the concept of masculinity (McDonald, 2018:61).

Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger (2012) suggest three models of South African hegemonic masculinities, namely “White”, “Rural African” and “Black Urban”<sup>10</sup>. He describes the so-called white masculinity by referring back to the Apartheid era, stating that the Afrikaner Nationalist government presented their “new” masculinity as a cultural idea on national level. This masculinity, campaigned to challenge the “English-capitalist versions which had hitherto dominated” (Morrell, *et al*, 2012:12 - 16), is referred to as the *Boer* masculinity by scholars Du Pisani (2002) and Swart (1998). The *Boer*-masculinity was a strong compass for identity building before 1994, when a much more hegemonic *Afrikaner* nationalistic masculinity was present in South Africa (Du Pisani, 2002:584). According to Swart (1998:738), the “original” *Boer* masculinity of the 1900’s was based on a Republican ideal, in a time when they had to fight for their country, their farms and their families. *Boere* were distinguished by their “Afrikaner nationalism” and had its foundations in “Calvinism, language and ‘ethnic ties’” (Steenkamp, 2016: 316). Today, this masculinity is associated with hard work and honesty. It

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<sup>10</sup> Terminology related to ethnic diversity can easily be misunderstood or considered as improper. It is my intention, however, to offer a perspective to the discussion that is locally relevant to the situation in South Africa. The terminology used in this chapter will be paraphrased carefully and used as found in the cited sources.



is still a very popular masculinity amongst South African men, even though less than 10% of Afrikaners are still living on farms (Du Pisani, 2001:161).

Next, the rural African masculinity is defined by the presence of “indigenous institutions (such as chiefship, communal land tenure, and customary law)” (Morrell *et al*, 2012:12). The main ethnic group represented in South Africa is the Nguni’s, consisting of the Zulu, Xhosa, Ndebele and Swazi groups (South Africa Language and Culture, 2020). Although it can be assumed that there will be differences between specific tribal traditions and virtues, some holistic observations of masculinity are present in all the cultures. One such observation is the great respect for elders and superiors, while also demanding respect from their juniors. Furthermore, scholars comment on the aggression and proneness to violence (Shai, Jewkes, Nduna & Dunkle, 2012:463), being “nurtured early on” by families encouraging their boys to participate in stick fighting as a symbol of their “warrior masculinity” (Carton & Morrell, 2012:34). These ethnic groups each have their own introduction for boys entering into manhood where initiation schools teach the values and virtues of men to teenage boys (Malisha, Maharaj & Rogan, 2008:586). For the Xhosa and Sotho people, this rite is combined with the act of circumcision, while Zulu boys go through a longer process through contesting and rivalry amongst each other, often through stick fighting (Carton & Morrell, 2012:40).

The third group of hegemonic masculinity, as identified by Morrell *et al*. (2012), is the urban Black man, distinguishable due to the fact that he moved away from his indigenous ethnic group into the city, often living in a township (Morrell *et al*, 2012:12). Although some of these men also undergo the initiation rites, the role of such schools has changed and the popularity of this tradition has decreased (Ragnarsson, Townsend, Ekström, Chopra & Thorson, 2010:2). In a study done by Ragnarsson *et al* (2010) in a township outside of Cape Town, the idealised masculinity was that of a so-called “player”. These men are discernible by two material factors, namely “wealth and women” - recognisable by the brands of clothing and accessories they possessed, along with the company of multiple female (sexual) partners (2010:4).

However, different scholars disagree about the factors that define masculinity. Clearly, Morrell based his classification on ethnicity. Contrastingly, scholars like Van der Walt (2007) pose that hegemonic masculinity cannot be defined by ethnicity alone. Rather, it comprises a number of factors, such as “the expression of emotion”, “rugby and contact sports” as well as “physical appearance”. Participants in his research study admitted that certain emotions, such as “anger and rage” were deemed more appropriate to show in public than, for example, “sadness” and



“depression” (2007:20 – 23). In fact, certain institutions have started treating men for so-called “masked depression”, showing “masculine specific symptoms, including anger and substance abuse” (Genuchi & Valdez, 2015:150). Some recent studies also propose a link between this aggressive hegemonic masculinity and risk-taking behaviour in adolescent boys (Langa, 2016:261).

Secondly, Van der Walt (2007) states that “most of the participants also made frequent references to the importance of how sports, and more specifically rugby, define what it is that constructs masculinity” (2007:22). South Africans are very passionate about their sport (especially rugby or soccer), and sport has indeed been identified as a “leading definer of masculinity in mass culture” (Connell, 1995:45). Researchers have theorised that this masculinity became popular in South Africa after 1994 because (white) men compensated for their loss of political power by consciously focusing on sport (Pretorius, 2013:219). This environment also provides a “socially acceptable platform of venting pent-up frustration, anger, and the will to dominate” (Van der Walt, 2007:22). Nixon (1997) distinguishes between two types of sportsmen, namely the traditional “rugged, aggressive rugby masculinity”, and a new focus on the male body in, for instance, beachwear, where men are normally hairless and toned, showing off their athleticism with bulging muscles (1997:294).

The third element, according to Van der Walt (2007), is physical appearance. Pretorius (2013) agrees, stating that examples of different masculinities may be modelled through “representation and discourse”, quite often distinguished by different styles of dressing (2013:212). A number of different styles can be identified, such as the metrosexual, the worker and the rebel. Firstly, the metrosexual man is classified as someone who is conscious about his appearance (Pompper, 2010:684). Also known as the “new” masculinity (Pretorius, 2013:216), this term was established in Britain in 1994 to identify the “disposition of modern, urbane men who embrace the dandified accoutrement of self-beautification” (Viljoen, 2008:315). This masculinity is also associated with the new roles and responsibilities that men had to conform to, owing to the rise in women’s rights and the “blurred” lines of femininity (Díaz & Carrizo, 2015:245). Although metrosexuality is not specifically associated with homosexuality (Pretorius, 2013:217), this masculinity is often inviting for men with “sexual ambivalence” (Nixon, 1997:179), due to the focus on grooming the body. In South African township slang, this masculinity is known as *loxion kulcha*, translated as “township culture” (Richards & Langa, 2018:89).

Other masculinities that can clearly be distinguished by their physical appearances include the Worker and Student masculinities that are closely related, marked by jeans and t-shirts. The student is usually younger and his hair may be longer. He is also more likely to wear name-branded clothes (Pretorius, 2013:221 - 222). These masculinities often stand in contrast to the Rebel, who prefers black clothes and projects a typical “bad boy” image (Martin & Koda, 1989:63). In other cultures, this rebellious masculinity may be referred to as a *tsotsi* (Langa, 2016:273), an indigenous word associated with violent and rule-breaking boys.

The search for an idealized hegemonic masculinity is a very intricate one, where a complex variety of elements needs to be taken into consideration. Masculinity is indeed a fluid concept, constantly changing on account of “generation, ethnicity and class” (Ragnarsson *et al*, 2010:2). However, the importance of understanding the reigning dominant masculinity of a specific culture lies in the comprehension of what people see as being manly. As men’s self-definitions are often shaped by certain roles in social groups, membership to one of these groups discussed above may ultimately influence their view on masculinity (Ragnarsson *et al*. 2010:2). Consequently, these ideas of what classifies as “being a real man” go to the core of shaping identities and help to form a conceptualised image of the man a boy will hope to become. Therefore, the idea of a preferred masculinity relates closely to the possible selves framework, which will be discussed below.

### **3.2.2 The possible selves framework**

The possible selves framework (as described by Markus & Nurius, 1986) is a concept that aims to represent a person’s “ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming”, by linking one’s motivation and cognitive concepts (Markus & Nurius, 1986:954). It is interesting to note that adolescents “hypothesise about more possible selves than do people at other ages”, both looking at identities they wish to become, as well as fears they have of turning into something or someone that they perceive as negative (Freer, 2010:22). These ideas of future identities are said to be very much detailed, even at a young age (Kirk, Lewis, Scott, Wren, Nisen & Colvin, 2012:508). This can obviously refer to individual identities, but in the case of men, it will most likely also evolve around group membership, such as sports teams, certain organisations or hostel groups (Henry & Cliffordson, 2013:275).

However, even the most wonderful dreams and goals can stay just that without a specific action plan of working towards that goal. Kirk *et al.* (2012) confirm that even if an adolescent has a detailed positive possible self imagined, it will be difficult to achieve if not backed up with “detailed strategies” on achieving this identity. These strategies need to be tailor-made to fit each individual (2012:510). Studies have shown that males and females react differently to certain plans. Henry and Cliffordson (2013:273) touch on this when they state that, while females are much more focussed on interpersonal relationships, adolescent males want to accentuate their uniqueness. Strategies including “introspection and self-appraisal” (2013:274) are therefore recommended when working with these male adolescents.

It must be mentioned that several studies suggest that “mood change may be falsely attributed to puberty hormones” (Duke *et al.* 2014:316). In recent years, a new trend opposing the *sturm und drang* theory (discussed earlier), known as “positive youth development”, has surfaced, accentuating adolescent “health, optimism and resilience” (Arnett, 2007:24). Relating to Markus and Nurius’ article on possible selves, Freer (2014:3) agrees that adolescents “prefer to engage in behaviours that are identity-congruent” and that motivation for perseverance with difficult tasks is easier if that task is in line with a congruent identity. In other words, adolescents who busy themselves with tasks that align with their ideal possible self are better motivated and would much more likely fall into the category of positive youth development. This confirms what is written in Csikszentmihalyi’s flow theory (1990), where positive experiences are to be repeated, rather than negative situations (Freer, 2010:21). Csikszentmihalyi found that humans tend to revert back to positive, or optimal situations where success was achieved, thereby organising thoughts and behavioural habits as self-definitions (Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1981). Kirk *et al.* (2012) agrees, stating that there is a definite link between positive early achievements and imagined future goals (2012:510).

It is therefore very important for choir masters to accompany adolescent singers in the identification of musical objectives or goals and the motivation to want to fulfil those goals (Freer, 2010:23). The research suggests that when an adolescent views himself as failing (for instance, failing in music for reasons such as difficulty in pitching due to voice change) (2010:24), “that self-perception may become their expectation for all future experiences in music” (2010:20). The same can be said for the role of choir in the adolescent’s image of his possible self. Different masculinities will need different motivational strategies to accept choral activities as part of their chosen identity. Some boys will be more aware of external factors, “such as poverty and parent level of education” (Kirk *et al.*, 2012:509), while others might

relate more to internal motivation. The key, therefore, is for the teacher to understand the individual motivational force, guiding each adolescent towards his preferred possible self.

### **3.3. The role of the teacher**

Adolescence as a developmental phase was not always recognised as such, being classified an “artefact of the 20<sup>th</sup> century”. Before that time, teenagers were already classified as young adults, being able to work, marry and have children. The first time that the word “teenager” appeared in media was only as relatively recent as 1941 (Skager, 2009:19). Once the distinction was made, however, the debates began on the correct way in which to teach children in this phase, both as parents or teachers. On the one side, people like Anna Freud and Erikson proposed that adolescents have a “strong need for strict control”, to ground them during this stormy period of change. However, this authoritative style does little to connect with teenagers when they are already feeling isolated (Eliot, 2009:11 - 13). In fact, it seems that most of the rebellion demonstrated by adolescents is flamed by the sensation that they are still being treated like children.

Studies show that children’s satisfaction rate with schools is at the lowest point around their grade 8 year (Kirk *et al.*: 2012:510) and teachers who take on a “zero tolerance” style contribute to what Skager (2009) calls the “infantilisation” of adolescents. Bettelheim (2001:207) explains this term by saying, “What makes for adolescent revolt is the fact that society makes the next generation too long dependent”. In other words, this style of enforcing discipline is, in effect, to treat teenagers like children which, in turn, leads to more teenagers acting out in rebellion. (Skager, 2009:19). Skager goes on to say that “believing that young people are still children has other serious consequences”, such as the justification of severe punishment to force others to obey the rules, while rather causing resentment and further uprisals against authority (2009:20).

Eliot (2009) proposes a teaching style she calls “alliance building”, where the adult remains the “CEO of the teenage brain”, guiding them to form good habits to carry into adulthood (2009:14). An alliance is defined as “an agreement to work with someone else to try to achieve the same thing” in the Cambridge Dictionary. The role of the teacher could then be described as the “senior partner” in the alliance, encouraging the adolescent and modelling the correct behaviour for the specific task at hand. It also means taking an active approach and making discoveries with them, rather than making them stay still and dictating knowledge (Skager,

2009: 20). Teachers should therefore strive towards a connection between themselves and the students (Kennedy, 2002:33). A study conducted in Belgium confirmed that “joint decision making” has the ability to accommodate an increase in psychosocial functionality (Van Petegem, Beyers, Vansteenkiste & Soenens, 2012:77), which should, presumably, lead to better adaptation as an adult.

In order to earn the respect, attention and confidence of an adolescent male, the teacher should attempt seeing the male student as a young man, instead of a boy. They should try to see that “young people differ from adults in lack of life experience rather than in any significant developmental capacities” (Skager, 2009:19). Furthermore, they should seek out the best in each student, and believe in their potential, verbally affirming them in their need for self-satisfaction (Kennedy, 2002:31). Hines and Paulson (2006) describes this approach as “moderate levels of control”, combined with “high levels of warmth” (2006:600). Additionally, Ramsey (2013) addresses the importance of establishing a “brotherhood” among the boys in a choir. According to her research, this brotherhood should consist of three foundations; namely, “support, pride and camaraderie”. She also states that adolescents have a strong urge to be themselves; and therefore, not labelled (2013:84 – 86). Regarding this study, Stohlman (2018:97) remarks that the term “maleness” (as an example) was never used, not even for choirs that only included boys.

Further to this, Wolff (2001:6) describes certain specific skills that a choir conductor should have, differentiating between “musical” and “non-musical” skills. The former comprises elements such as “excellent musicianship”, comprehension of texts, a knowledge of choir works and an ability to play piano at a reasonable level. The role of the correct choice of repertoire (as touched on by Freer above) cannot be ignored. Very often the choir’s repertoire is chosen based on the music preference of the conductor, with little knowledge of the technical challenges the music holds. This leads to the boys sounding “off” to themselves, and wanting to quit the choir (Kennedy: 2002 in Warzecha, 2013:46). Alternatively, the conductor could choose music that is too easy, with tedious melody lines or unrelatable words (Freer, 2012a: 23). There should thus be a very fine balance between competition repertoire, and music that the boys want to sing. Unfortunately, “adolescent-friendly” music (referring to range) is hard to come by. Conductors should identify composers with a knowledge of boys’ voices to commission songs that are specifically tailored to the range abilities of that particular choir. This will also mean regular testing of the boys’ ranges to ensure that everyone is still comfortable singing certain notes (Dilworth, 2013:25).

Other knowledge includes a thorough study of the changing voice as discussed earlier, and the psychology that goes along with it; exercises for breathing, breath control and vocal training, as well as general knowledge about the holistic development of each chorister in his choir. For example, the correct posture plays a vital role in singing, but also in the development of the vocal organ. A common mistake that so many choir conductors make is arranging the singers in a semi-circle where the ends are curved too much. If the singers on the end get into the habit of only turning their heads towards the conductor, instead of their whole bodies, the larynx will not develop straight, causing permanent damage (Allan, 2012:304).

Non-musical skills described by Wolff (2001) includes a friendly, resourceful and likeable personality, a strong and projecting speaking voice, motivational and organisational skills as well as having a strong imagination. In short, the conductor should be able to “extract greatness out of ordinary children by touching their souls and inspiring them to reach for the outer limits of their abilities” (2001:8 - 10).

Teachers, even more than parents or peers, are often the “prime motivating force” for adolescents (Kennedy, 2002:33). It has been said often that when grown-ups reminisce about school, they will not remember subject content - but they remember their teachers. Therefore it is of the utmost importance to educate and empower choral conductors and choir masters to ensure that they are building relationships with their students – and in this case, specifically, the adolescent boys. Kirk *et al.* (2012:510) writes that the school climate, of which relationships with teachers form a large part, “contribute to global life satisfaction..., lower rates of depression... and fewer behavioural problems”. He continues to say that students who experience comfort and support, while also being valued by their teachers, will most likely see themselves as good students which will, in turn, lead to positive experience building and as a stepping stone to a positive possible self (Kirk *et al.*, 2012:516). Ultimately, this relationship may lead to the strengthening of “artistic citizenship”, a concept campaigned by Elliot (2012) to explain the true cause of music education. According to Elliot (2012):

“When music education is ethically guided – when we teach not only in music (i.e. to do music) and about music but also (and crucially) *through* music – we empower people to pursue what many philosophers throughout history consider to be the highest human values: a virtuous life well lived, a life of well-being, flourishing, fulfilment, and constructive happiness for the benefit of oneself and others” (2012:22).

### 3.4 Conclusion

Many scholars from around the world share experiences of the supposed “missing male phenomenon”, as described by Freer (2010). Researchers have posited many different explanations for the lack of boys’ participation in high school-based music activities. After an extensive study of the literature, I identified six reasons most often presented by these scholars. These reasons are boys’ busy schedules and the focus on sport; the need for male role models; the assumed feminine nature of singing, inefficient teaching, negativity surrounding voice change and effective school leadership.

While summarizing and analysing these different aspects mentioned above, it became clear that the majority of the factors identified above are related to either the adolescents’ self-image; or the role of the vocal or choir teacher. As the whole nature of adolescence is based on growing into adulthood, creating a positive self-image is the cardinal crisis that boys face during this phase of their lives. This requires evaluating an amalgam of different elements, such as observing role models, associating with a specific type of masculinity, and the contextualization of an idealized possible self. Consequently, factors such as the expression of emotion, the affinity with rugby and other contact sports and the importance (or lack thereof) of one’s physical appearance all need to be evaluated to be able to realize one’s ideal possible self.

As these boys will most definitely need guidance in the process of identity formation, the role of the teacher needs to expand beyond the classroom or rehearsal facilitator to that of a vocal parent. The concept of vocal parenting posits that teachers, as *in loco parentis*<sup>11</sup>, should inspire children and be involved in their students’ lives to a much greater extent than merely their singing. In order to steer boys to appreciate the idea of artistic citizenship, teachers will have to model the virtues of what being part of a choir or musical family entails, while also reaching out to students in an alliance-based trust relationship. In able to equip teachers to provide this kind of guidance, proper training is needed on undergraduate as well as post-graduate level, to ensure that every teacher, regardless of the academic path he/she follows, will receive this information. The course should include both musical and non-musical elements needed to not only run a successful rehearsal, but to build a successful, balanced choir as well. Hence,

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<sup>11</sup> A legal term, meaning that the teacher is acting in the place of a parent (Oosthuizen & Van der Walt, 1998: p. 89).



teachers also need to study the different developmental stages that children (in this context, boys) experience, specifically focussing on adolescence and the physical and psychological changes that occur during this stage.

As stated before, the majority of the ideas voiced in this literature review originated in studies done overseas – especially in Europe, the USA, Australia and New Zealand. It will, however, be very interesting to see whether these perspectives also prove true in the South African environment. I have therefore compared the opinions and beliefs emerging from this study to the existing literature, in order to provide a uniquely South African position on this phenomenon. These outcomes will be discussed in length in chapter 6.



## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS (PART 1)

This chapter serves to describe the process and discuss the findings that emerged from this study. My objective, as mentioned previously, is to find out why there are so few adolescent boys in choral programmes in South Africa. More specifically, I want to focus on the boys' self-image at the time of voice change, as well as the role of the choir master in guiding the boys through this process. The nature of my research questions led me to choose a qualitative approach, as mentioned in the previous chapter. For primary data collection, questionnaires were chosen as instrument. These questionnaires, which will be discussed below, were handed out twice for completion. The first round of data was collected between January and February 2019; and the second round in July - August 2019. The repetition of the questions was done in order to test the validity, as well as monitor self-development amongst the adolescent boys. Both sets of data were collected from the same groups of respondents, i. e. boys of the respective choirs and a representative grade 8 class from two mixed-gender schools and two all-boys' schools.

As mentioned in the chapter on methodology (chapter 2), a total of 235 students completed the questionnaire; yet, I only received parental consent forms from 165 participants. A possible reason for the low completion of parental forms is that they merely forgot to send in the forms. I did not receive a single objection to the study – in fact, every time I carefully followed up on outstanding forms, I received a few consents, with apologies of “being busy” and “forgetting” to complete them. However, I am confident that the sample will be effective. Working with a population size of 235 ( $n = 235$ ), and a confidence level of 95%, the data obtained from the 165 participants result in an error level of less than 4.3%. This percentage was calculated by using a spreadsheet with formulas prepared by the Centre for Statistical Consultation at the University of Stellenbosch.

The questionnaire consisted of three sections. Section A (question 1 – 8) focused on the boy's changing voice, and his feelings and opinions towards the process of change. This section was only to be completed by participants whose voices had changed at that stage. Section B (question 9 – 19) concentrated on the school choir and the boy's participation or lack thereof in the choir. Section C, in which the boy had to draw himself before and after voice change, will be explored in the next chapter. The questions will be analysed and discussed in numerical order below. The answers of the two rounds of questionnaires will then also be compared with

each other. I did not want to draw too many conclusions, thereby making unjustifiable assumptions, before being able to analyse both sets of data. Therefore, some opinions and remarks have only been added to the discussion of the second round of research.

#### **4.1 First round of research (January – February 2019)**

The answers given to the various questions asked in the questionnaire will be discussed in numerical order below. Question one asked whether anyone had guided the boy through the process of voice change (yes/no). Following on this question, question 2 asked for a description of the relationship with this person, if there had been guidance. Subsequently, if no guidance had been given, question 3 asked if the participant would have liked guidance, and to describe someone that he would have liked talking to about this process. In the first round, 140 out of the 165 participants' voices had started changing. From these 140 boys, 36% (50 boys) had guidance, and 64% (90 boys) had no guidance. Twenty-seven of the boys who answered "yes" came from all boys' schools (54%) and 39 (78%) were choir singers. The guidance, if given, mostly came from family members, vocal and choir teachers and other types of mentors, like "the seniors in the choir" or "someone that went through it before me". The answers spoke of trusting this person, while also including "specialised" people that had gone through this process. These seemed to be the two factors that also came out in the counter question, where the boys had to describe someone they wish had guided them through the process, if they had none.

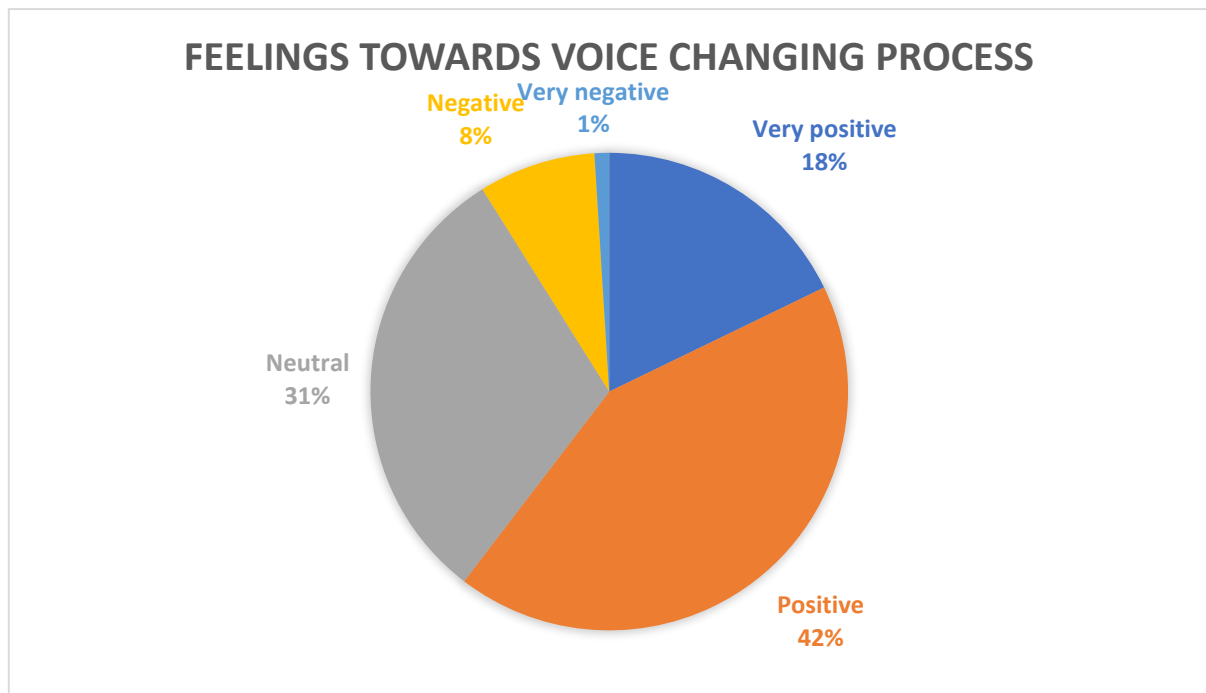
Of the boys that had no guidance, 45% (38) wished they could have spoken to someone, while 55% (46) stated that it "did not really bother" them not having discussed the process with someone. These boys either referred to the process as "natural" and therefore did not deem it an important or life-changing event; or they admitted that it would be "embarrassing" to speak to someone about it. Choristers seem to suffer the most without proper guidance. Thirty-four out of the 38 participants, or 89%, that indicated that they would have liked to speak to someone were choir singers. Twenty-four of the 38 (63%) came from all-boys schools.

Question 4 asked the participants to choose their preferred voice (current or previous). They also had the option of choosing "unsure". Then, question 5 and 6 elaborated on the participants' feelings towards their preferred voice (question 5) and changed voice (question 6). Most of the boys preferred their current, changed voice (104 out of 140 participants, or 74%). They described their new voice as "deeper" (39 mentions), more grown-up and "manly", and stated

that they have more confidence singing and speaking, because of a variety of reasons, such as a larger range, more control over their voices, and a fuller sound. One participant wrote, “My voice is my happiness, sense of life and a way to pull me out of the pits of depression”. However, 26 boys were “unsure”, stating that both voices had good qualities; and 9 participants, all choir singers, preferred their previous voice. Seven of these nine boys are from boys’ schools. Reasons given for preferring their unchanged voices were how comfortably they used to sing with it, and being able to reach higher notes. One participant chose not to answer this question.

I expected the feeling of loss of their old voice being a consequence of not having proper guidance through the process. However, six of the nine boys (67%) indicated that they, in fact, did have someone to guide them during this time. They reported feelings of sadness and uncomfortability when singing, and one boy said that he sounded “like a frog”.

Questions 7 and 8 were aimed at rating and describing the voice-changing process. The options given were positioned on a scale from “very positive”, “positive”, “neutral”, “negative” to “very negative”. Eighteen percent of the boys (23) indicated that the process had been a very positive one, with 43% (57 boys) rating the experience as positive. This means that a total of 61% of the boys had a positive experience with voice change. Thirty-one percent (45 boys) indicated that they were “neutral” about the process; and only 8% (10 boys) had a negative experience, with one rating (1%) of “very negative”. These results confirm a previous study done by Killian (1997, in Warzecha, 2013:46), where 87% of the participants rated voice change as positive or neutral; and 13% indicated having a negative experience with voice change. Of these eleven ratings on the negative side of the scale, only one is a non-singer; and eight are from a boys’ school. Four participants did not answer this question. Graph 1 below offers a visual representation of the boys’ feelings towards the voice changing process.



***Graph 4.1 Feelings towards voice changing process***

In describing the process (question 8), it was clear that “voice cracks” were common, although that did not seem to have a negative impact on the boys. One participant, although rating the experience as positive, said, “Voice change is a very emotional time. You have many questions and are exposed to many opinions”. Another indicated that he “could not speak or sing very high, so (he) could not make choir in grade 7, which was sad”. He, too, indicated that the process was a positive one. The fact that singing was interrupted was the main explanation for the negative feelings towards voice change. These boys felt the loss of range or voice control which impacted negatively on their self-esteem. One boy wrote, “Singing was my passion, had to stop when voice started changing. When I stopped, I got depressed”.

Section B concentrated on the school choir. Question 9 asked the participants to indicate whether they are part of their school’s choir. Of the 165 participants, 114 were choir singers, and 51 were non-singers. Motivations for joining the school choir (question 10) was indicated firstly and very strongly as a love for music and singing, the fact that choir is a fun way of representing your school, singing with friends and becoming a family. Participants also commented on the feeling of being a part of something larger than oneself, discovering new things about yourself while singing, and choir being an “escape” from certain harsh realities. Only four participants indicated that they were “forced” to join.

Reasons given by non-singers for not joining choir were, again, led by the fact that they merely do not enjoy singing, or think that they do not have a good voice. This is in line with a study done by Nannen (2017:127), where the primary reason for boys' non-participation in singing was identified as a "fear of failure or a belief that they did not possess the necessary level of vocal skill to be successful". Seven participants (14%) mentioned that choir rehearsals clashed with sport practises; and eight boys (16%) claim that they have "too much to do". There were also some misconceptions exposed. One participant from a boys' school felt that, because he did not sing choir in primary school, he had "too much to catch up on". Another boy was "kicked out" of choir when his voice changed, and that led him to believe that he cannot sing anymore. A third was convinced that he could not sing choir, because he suffers from rhotacism.

The reactions were quite varied in response to the question "what would make you join / leave the choir" (question 11). Nineteen non-singers (37%) indicated that nothing would make them join the choir, and another eight (16%) said that they would join if they could sing. The remaining 24 (47%) exposed a variety of opinions, including insecurities about their voices and a lack of information, or a very busy schedule. Four participants (8%) said that they would consider joining with their friends. Some notable considerations for joining were:

- Help from teacher (to learn music notes) (3 mentions)
- People affirming that your voice is good enough (5 mentions)
- Tours and competitions (3 mentions)
- To be rewarded
- To impress a girl
- If there were no sport
- If they sang nice songs

On the other hand, forty out of the 114 current singers (35%) indicated that they do not intend to leave choir before the end of their grade 12 year. The two major factors for considering leaving the choir was time-related (either having too much on their plate, feeling the rehearsals are too long; or that the rehearsal times clash with sports); or focussed on a specific member or section of the choir. Participants mentioned inconsiderate or uncooperative members and teachers who are "unfair" and "grumpy". Six boys (5%), of which 5 were from the two boys' schools, stated that they would consider leaving if the choir conductor left; and two boys

remarked that they would leave if the choir “wasn’t like family” anymore. Finally, seven participants (6%) stated that they will leave once choir becomes “boring”.

Question 12, in which the participants had to rate the success of the choir in competitions, was based on the presumption that boys will sing choir if they believe that the choir is of a good standard (as suggested in Harrison, 2007:278). While this proved true with the singers, even the non-singers agreed that their school choir was of a high standard, thus disproving the hypothesis. In fact, the non-singers rated the success of the choir more than the choristers themselves! Overall, 47% of the participants (78 boys) ranked the choir as “excellent” and 35% (58 boys) as “very good”. Twelve percent (20 boys) marked the “good” rating, and only two choir boys felt the choir was only “average”. Seven participants indicated that they were unsure of the choir’s success.

Consequently, question 13 asked participants to discuss the impression that the school’s choir made on them personally. Interestingly enough, it seems that non-singers from boys’ schools are more impressed with their school’s choir than boys from mixed-gender schools. Fifty-five percent of the nine non-singers from mixed-gender schools (5 boys) indicated that the choir made no impression on them whatsoever, and one more participant wrote that the choir made him “tired”. To non-singers from boys’ schools, the choir was “motivational” and they indicated feeling proud of the choir and the way that it represents the school. They were also impressed with the choir members’ hard work. Choir singers described the choir as a positive environment with people you can call your family. They also indicated that singing in the choir teaches much more than just beautiful music. The personal development taking place is of great value to the participants and they also take an immense pride in being part of something “bigger than yourself”.

In question 14, the choir conductor had to be described as a teacher, without using his/her name. The question was asked because I wondered if the likeability of the conductor would have an influence on more boys choosing to sing in the choir; and if the choristers experienced the conductor as an effective teacher. The answers received spoke of praise and respect amongst singers and non-singers alike. Participants described the respective conductors as “friendly, funny and kind”. Choristers agreed that the conductor was an expert in his or her field. The only difference I could see was that it seems that the boys’ choir conductors are much harder on discipline than their colleagues in the mixed-gender schools. Forty percent of boys’ school

choir singers (32 boys) mentioned the conductor being “strict, but justifiably so”, in contrast to no mentions of strictness in mixed-gender schools.

Question 15 asked the participant to indicate whether he sang in his primary school choir; and question 16 sought reasons for stopping choir, if they did indeed sing in primary school. A large majority of boys (100 out of 114, or 88%) who sang in the primary school choir re-joined the choir at high school level. However, 14 boys decided to leave choir, for various reasons. Eleven of these 14 boys, 26%, were among the 42 non-singers in all-boys’ schools, with a 33% drop-out rate (3 boys) in mixed-gender school participants. The most popular reasons provided for quitting the choir were having a very busy schedule or rehearsal times clashing with sport practises, as well as voices changing and either becoming self-conscious, or being “kicked out” and losing interest thereafter. Two participants mentioned choir being “boring” and another three indicated that choir was “not for me”. It is interesting to note that the top reasons as given by the participants agree with some of the reasons stated in my literature review (see chapter 2).

Question 17 posed six statements that participants had to rate on a scale from 1 (completely disagree) to 10 (completely agree). The first statement was “singing is a feminine activity”. The following results are the average of the scale between 1 and 10. The overall average answer given was 2.3. The average given by all participants in boys’ schools were 2.5; and 1.7 for boys in mixed-gender schools. The average given by non-singers was substantially higher: 4.2 versus 1.5 given by choir singers. However, it is heartening to see that the stigma of singing “being only for girls” does not seem to make an impression on these boys at all. Even the non-singers gave an average answer of below 5 out of 10. This might disprove a discussion in my literature review (singing is a feminine activity) – although I must reiterate that this study was done in schools with well-established choirs. The viewpoint might be completely different in schools or environments with no choir culture. This observation will be discussed further in chapter 6 (conclusions).

Secondly, the statement was made that “boys who play sports are more masculine than boys who sing in the choir”. The average score given by all the participants were 3.6. Boys from the boys’ schools gave an average rating of 3.8; and mixed-gender schools indicated 3.0 as their average score. Choral singers again gave a lower average of 2.7. The non-singers’ average was 4.5. Subsequently the claim was made that “choir members who also do a sport are more masculine than boys who only sing in the choir”. The average score given by all the participants

were 4.3. The boys' school average was 4.6, while the average indicated by boys from mixed-gender schools was 3.4. Non-singers rated this question with an average of 5.4; while choir members gave an average score of 3.8. These scores are still low; therefore, I can assume that choral singers were not labelled "less of a man" – although it is better for their image if they compete in a sport along with their singing.

Then it was proposed that "basses are more masculine than tenors". This question was added to find out whether the lower frequency of a bass' voice is considered to be more masculine than that of a tenor. The overall average was indicated as 2.8. Participants from the boys' schools gave an average of 3.3; while a much lower 1.8 was the average score from boys in mixed-gender schools. The choristers' average score was 2.3 and non-singers indicated 3.6 as an average. Apparently, then, the participants do not consider a deeper voice to be more manly.

The fifth statement was that "it is embarrassing if girls hear you sing". The general average was calculated as 3.5. Only a small deviation can be seen between the boys' school average of 3.2 and those of boys in mixed-gender schools of 3.4. However, quite a large discrepancy can be seen when comparing the non-singers at an average of 5.7 versus the choir boys at 2.6. This is a very interesting concept to analyse. What I understand from the answers given by non-singers is that, although they do not see singing as being feminine (non-masculine) themselves, when being in the presence of girls, anything even slightly non-masculine could be potentially embarrassing. I suppose that this duology in self-image might have something to do with the imaginary audience as discussed in chapter 2.

Lastly, "if you are/were not in the choir and your best friend decided to join, you would join the choir as well" was posed for rating. The overall average was given as 6.0. Participants from boys' schools felt strongly about this with an average of 7.8; with 5.8 indicated by participants from mixed-gender schools. Choir singers also have a much higher average at 7.0 than their non-singer counterparts at 4.5. To be able to compare the averages given in answer to question 17 effectively, I have included a table (table one on the next page) to compare the scores visually.

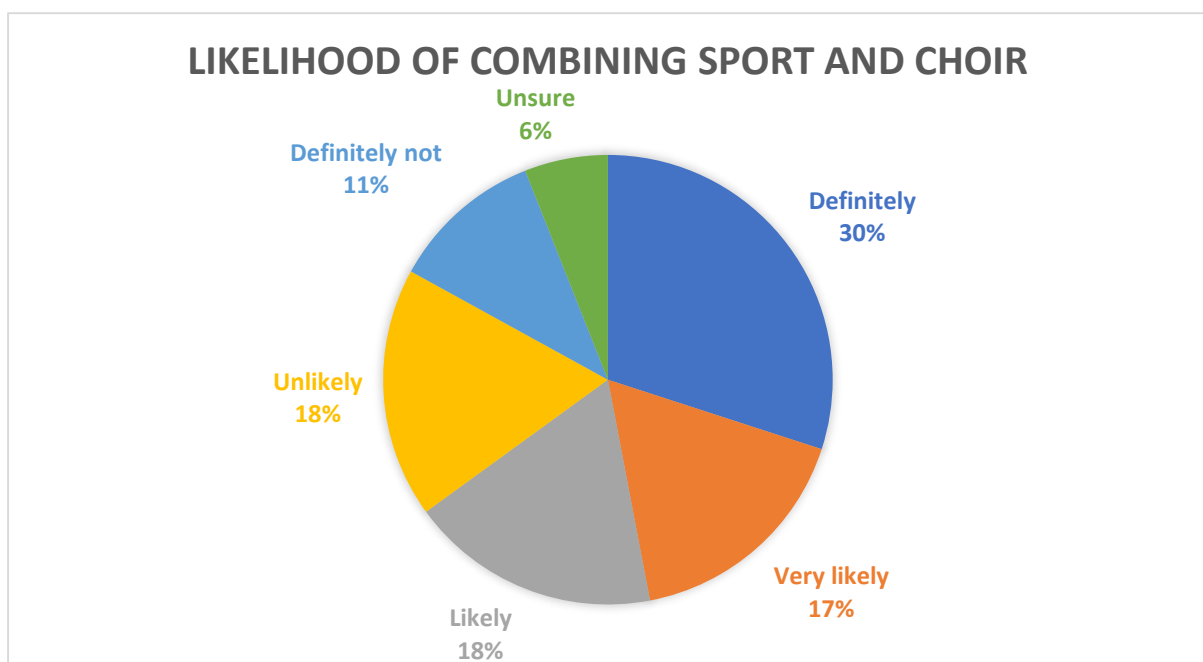


**Table 4.1 Distribution of question 17 scores: First round of research**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Overall Average</b>	<b>Boys' school</b>	<b>Mixed- gender</b>	<b>Choir</b>	<b>Non-choir</b>
Singing is a feminine activity	2.3	2.5	1.7	4.2	1.5
Boys who play sports are more masculine than boys who sing in the choir	3.6	3.8	3.0	4.5	2.7
Choir members who also do a sport are more masculine than boys who only sing in the choir	4.3	4.6	3.4	5.4	3.8
Bases are more masculine than tenors	2.8	3.3	1.8	3.6	2.3
It is embarrassing if girls hear you sing	3.5	3.2	3.4	5.7	2.6
If you are/were not in the choir and your best friend decided to join, you would join as well	6.0	7.8	5.8	4.5	7.0

The last two questions were aimed at discovering the focus of sport versus choir; and if a combination of the two was possible. Question 18 asked participants to make a choice between sport or choir (with “unsure” added as a third option). Forty-two percent of the 165 participants (69 boys) said that if they had to make a choice, they would choose sport. Thirty-five percent of the choir members chose choir (57 boys); while the other 23% participants (39 boys, 5 of which were non-singers), were “unsure” of what they would choose. Interestingly enough, the percentage of boys from each choir preferring sport to choir is somewhat smaller than I imagined. Just 20% of boys, both in boys’ – and mixed-gender schools, would choose sport if they were forced to make a choice.

Subsequently, question 19 asked how likely the boys would combine both activities (sport and choir) if it were possible. The options given ranged from “definitely”, “very likely”, “likely”, “unlikely” to “definitely not”, with an added “unsure” option. The majority of the participants seemed to be positive towards an opportunity to combine sport and choir. Thirty percent of the 165 participants (51 boys) indicated that they would “definitely” combine choir and sport where possible. Seventeen percent (28 boys) said that they would “very likely” combine; and another 18% (30 boys) chose the “likely” option. This means that a total of 65% of boys are open to the idea of doing both sport and choir. Eighteen percent of the participants (29 boys) deemed this option “unlikely”, while 11% (17 boys) would “definitely not” consider the combination of sport and choir. Finally, 6% of the participants (10 boys) were unsure as to whether they would choose to do both. Of the latter groups, nineteen of the participants choosing not to combine these options indicated choir as their preferred activity in the previous question. The division of the answers to question 19 has been arranged in graph format below (graph 4.2), to compare the weight distribution of the different opinions.



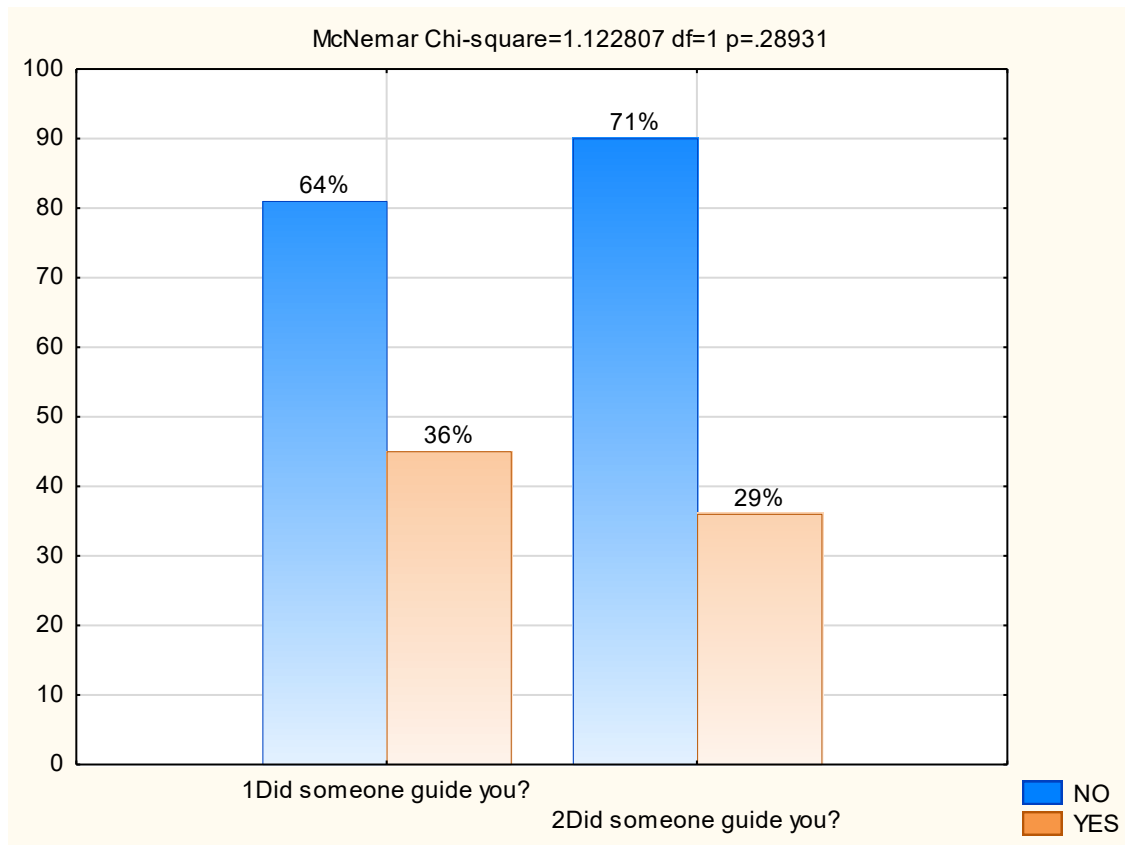
*Graph 4.2 Likelihood of combining sport and choir*

## 4.2 Second round of research (July – August 2019)

The second round of questionnaires, completed roughly 6 months after the first, will be discussed below. The same questionnaire was handed out for completion, and the discussion will continue to follow in the same order as above. In this round of discussion, I have added some comparisons between the answers given in the first and second round, both in text format and by means of statistical analysis (as stated before, I refrained from drawing too many conclusions before being able to compare the two sets of data). In questions where two nominal variables are being compared with only two possible outcomes (for example yes/no), McNemar tests are used to test for differences between the two rounds of data (indicated with a 1 or 2), while Stuart-Maxwell tests are used when there are three or more outcomes. Where ordinal variables are being tested (question 17), t-tests were done, followed by the Wilcoxon test as non-parametrical equivalent, as both these tests present similar outcomes. All the statistical data were captured and analysed in Statistica, before exporting graphs and tables to Microsoft Word.

In the second round of research, sixteen of the 161 participants' voices still remained unchanged. Please note that four respondents did not refill the questionnaire due to being absent on the date of data collection. To compare the two rounds of answers to each other, McNemar's

test and chi-square testing (see graph 4.3 below) were utilized to add statistical validity. These tests are used to indicate whether the two sets of variables have any relation to each other (Rana & Singhal, 2015: p 70). The graphs on the left side (marked 1) are the values derived from the first round of research; and those on the right (marked 2) from the second round.



***Graph 4.3 Guidance during voice change***

Notice a discrepancy of between 6% and 7% between the answers in the first and second round. Naturally more voices changed, but interestingly enough 34 participants changed their answers from the first to the second round. According to McNemar's test as applied to 2 x 2 contingency tables with different categories (Sun & Yang, 2008:2), the data can be presented as follows (see table 4.2 below.) The number 1 in the table refers to the first round of research; while 2 refers to the second round.

**Table 4.2 Two-way summary table**

Two-way summary table: observed frequencies Marked cells have counts > 10			
Did someone guide you? (1)	Did someone guide you? (2) NO	Did someone guide you? (2) YES	Row totals
NO	57	24	81
Row %	70.37%	29.63%	
YES	33	12	45
Row %	77.33%	26.67%	
Totals	90	36	126

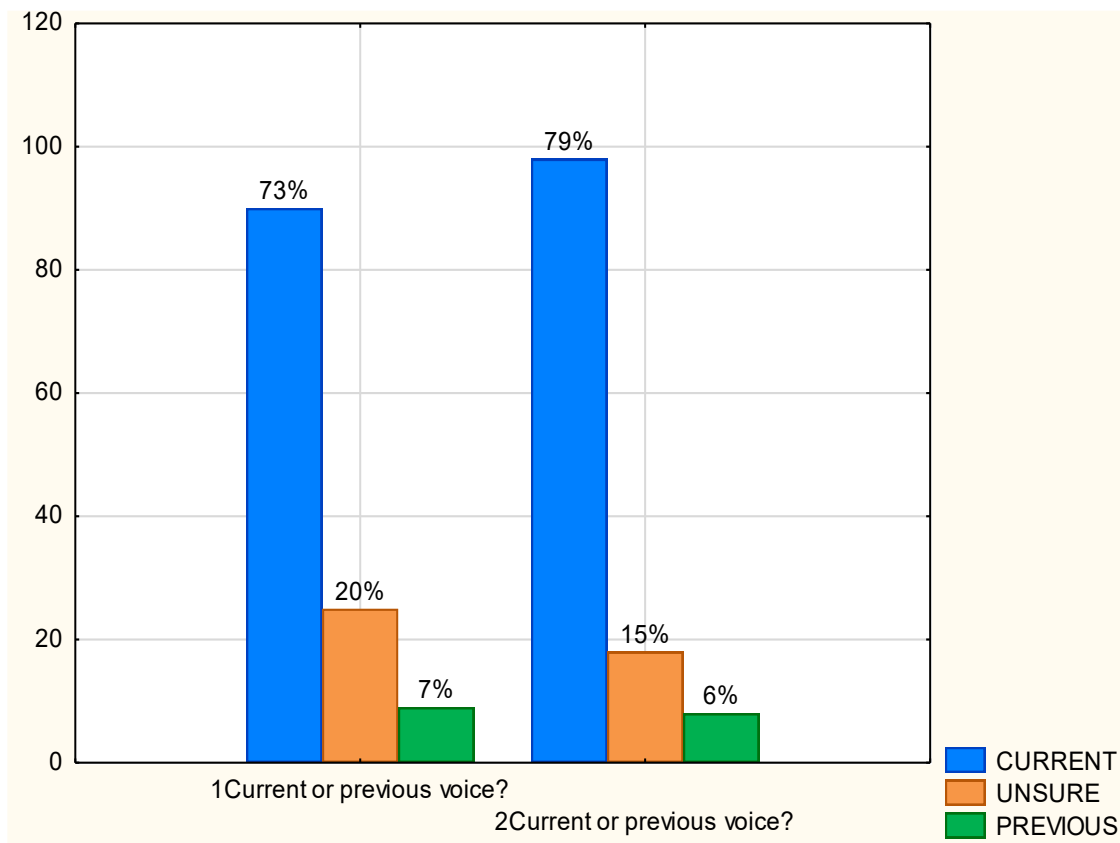
A total of 63% participants out of the 104 boys who did not receive guidance (66 boys) are of opinion that they did not need someone to talk to, as it is a “natural experience” or “personal matter”. Thirty-two percent (33 boys, of which 27 are choir singers) would have liked guidance, and 4 boys chose not to answer the question. Comparing these results to the first round, it is clear that quite a few boys who struggled with voice change at the beginning of the year have started to accept the process as normal. In fact, eleven of the participants who wished to have guidance during the first round, now stated that it did not matter and they did not need to speak about it. As mentioned earlier, another fourteen boys that wanted someone to talk to in round one had now indicated that they did have guidance.

It is becoming clear to me that voice change seems to be a normal process for non-singers, and one they are excited about, as it is one of the clear signs of a rite of passage. This possibly provides a reason for the lack of educational material on the subject at school level as well. However, singers seem to have a very different encounter, as some experience the start of voice change as a loss of identity. Choir leaders and singing teachers, both in primary school and high school, need to be equipped to guide and educate boys about the process. I will elaborate more on this statement in chapter 6.

In the second round of questioning, six percent (9 boys, of which eight are choir singers) still preferred their previous voice, mostly because of the wider range of notes they could reach. Seventy-nine percent (112 boys) preferred their current voice, while 15% (23 boys) were unsure. One participant did not answer the question. The comparison of the outcome of preferred voices is compared visually below (graph 4) by using the Stuart-Maxwell graph. This

test, which can be referred to as an extension of the McNemar test, is used “for evaluating marginal homogeneity” (Yang, Sun & Hardin, 2011:1313). In other words, we are looking for similarities in the data provided. Again, 1 refers to the first round of research; and 2 to the second round.

Stuart-Maxwell  $\text{Chisq}(2)=1.37$   $p=0.51$

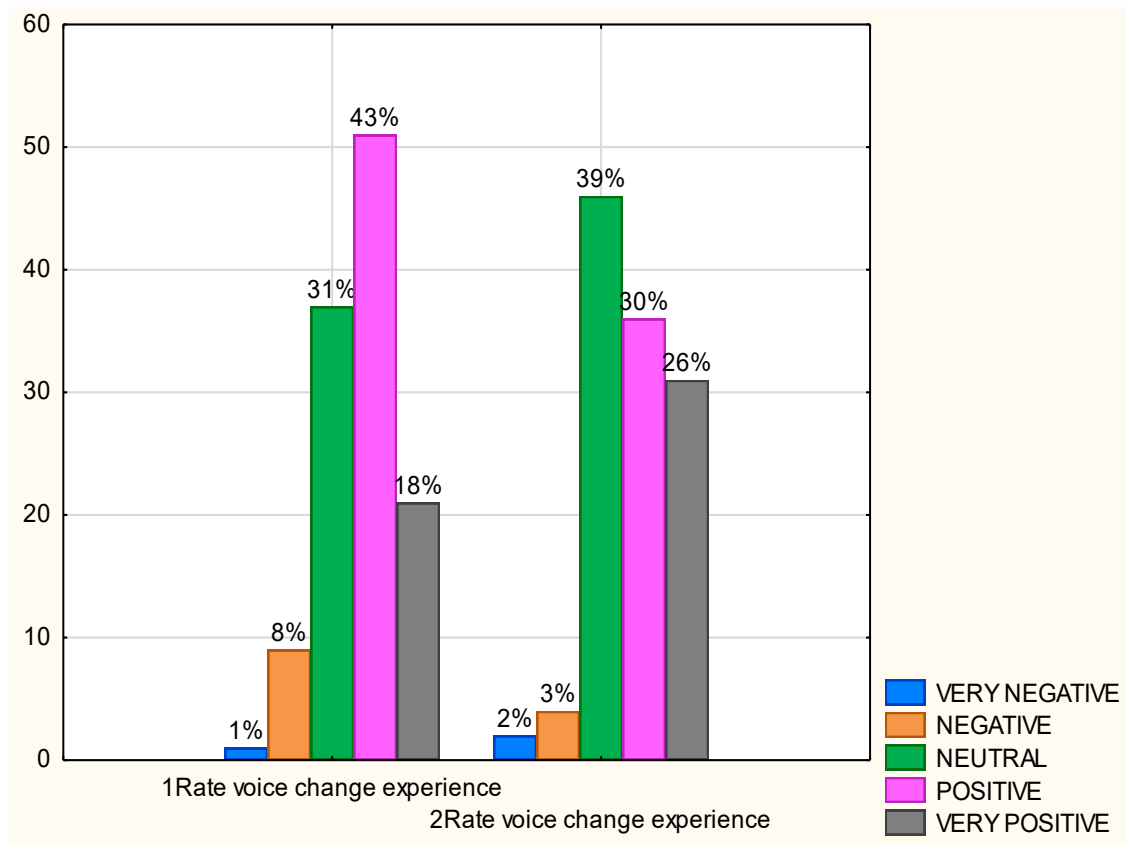


**Graph 4.4 Voice preference (current or previous voice)**

In accordance with the larger acceptance of their current voices, I assumed that the response on participants’ feelings towards voice change would be more positive as well. Thirty-four and forty-eight boys respectively indicated that the process of voice change was either “very positive” or “positive”. The percentage of boys associating voice change with a positive experience is therefore calculated as 56%, which is actually 5% lower than in the first round of research. The largest majority, 39%, rated the experience as “neutral”. This is slightly higher than the 31% stipulated in the first round. Voice change was rated as a negative experience for five choristers; and another two singers marked the process as a “very negative” one. Three

boys chose not to answer the question. See the Stuart-Maxwell graph included below for a visual comparison of the answers.

Stuart-Maxwell  $\text{Chisq}(4)=7.10$   $p=0.13$



**Graph 4.5 Voice change experience**

In this round, one hundred and twelve participants sang in their respective school choirs. There were, however, a number of new singers that were not present when the boys filled out the first questionnaire; as well as a few singers who left the choir within the 6 months that had passed between the two rounds of data collection. The reasons for quitting choir, as given by the conductors, vary from being too busy, having a problem with lifts to practises and focusing on academics; to simply underestimating the number of practises or not taking choir seriously. New reasons for not joining the choir stated in the second round was that rehearsals happened “too late” in the day and that some boys missed the audition notice. For singers, alternative reasons for joining the choir was indicated as a search for a “safe space” and that choir rehearsals have the added benefit of strengthening and developing one’s voice. Three

participants indicated that they joined the choir because of a teacher believing in them and their talent.

Forty-six percent of the choristers (52 boys) stated that nothing would make them leave choir. This percentage is more than 10% higher than that of the first round of research done in February 2019. Newly recorded reasons that possibly influenced the other 54% to quit was to rather focus on their academic achievements, a lack of commitment or bullying from members and a lack of discipline amongst their fellow choir members. On the other hand, 59%, or twenty-nine out of the 49 non-singers, indicated that there is nothing that could persuade them to join the choir. This percentage is also substantially higher than the 37% scored in February, during the first round of research. Three participants indicated that they would consider joining if the rehearsal times were moved to earlier in the day. Another three said that, due to the choir's achievements and tours they undertake, they would like to start with choir and are merely waiting for the next audition opportunity.

Very interestingly, the success rating of the choir decreased somewhat between February (round one of questioning) and August (round two of questioning). In comparison to the 48% "excellent" rating from the first round, only 33% (53 participants) still thought that their school choir performed excellently. Forty-five percent (73 boys) indicated that they thought their choir is "very good", with another 17% (27 boys) deeming it "good". The rest of the equation is made up of three "average" and one "poor" rating. Four participants were still unsure of the choir's success. As I was curious to see if there would be a substantial difference between the ratings of the singers and non-singers, I included a columnal comparison below. Table 3 shows the ratings for choir singers in the first and second round of data collection (marked 1 and 2); while table 4 shows the same ratings for non-singers.



**Table 4.3 Rating of the school choir by choir singers**

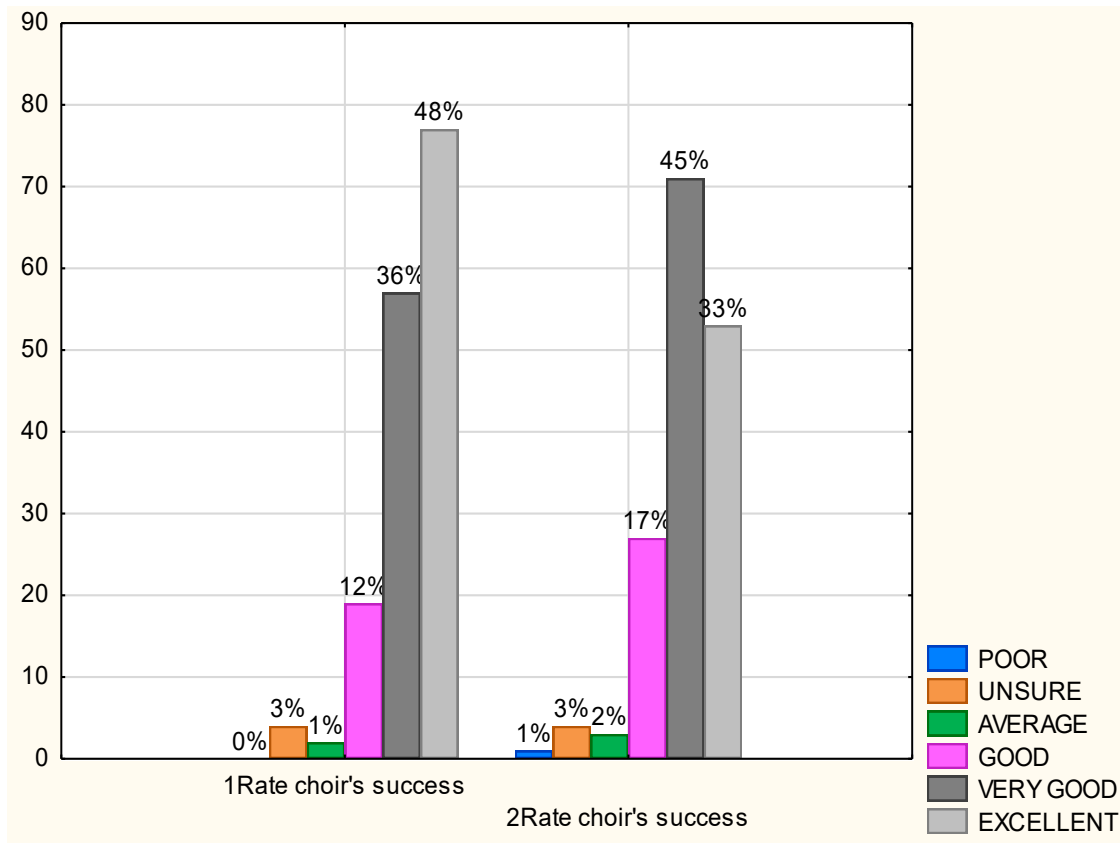
<b>Rating</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Deviation</b>
Excellent	46	40	32	29	-11%
Very good	47	41	57	51	+10%
Good	15	13	20	18	+5%
Average	2	2	3	3	+1%
Poor	0	0	0	0	0%
Unsure	3	3	0	0	-3%
Total	114		112		

**Table 4.4 Rating of the school choir by non-singers**

<b>Rating</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Deviation</b>
Excellent	32	63	21	43	-20%
Very good	11	22	16	33	+10%
Good	5	10	7	14	+4%
Average	0	0	0	0	0%
Poor	0	0	1	2	+1%
Unsure	4	8	4	8	0%
Total	51		49		

I was really intrigued by the reasons for the lower ratings of the choir. Clearly, 20% of the non-singers changed their minds about their school choirs being excellent. However, the mean ratings of both the “very good” and “good” categories increased. The same pattern can be seen with the choristers, although the drop in the “excellent” rating is slightly lower at 11%. This phenomenon will be discussed further in chapter 6.

For a holistic overview, I have included the Stuart-Maxwell graph on the comparisons of ratings of the choir’s success (graph 4.6) below. As before, the number 1 refers to the first round of data collection; and the number 2 to the second round.

Stuart-Maxwell  $\chi^2(4)=8.11$   $p=0.09$ **Graph 4.6 Choir success rating**

Comparing the answers on question 14, it seems that the relationship between the choral conductors and their choir members has grown deeper in the course of the six months that passed between the first and second round of research. Where the non-singers' views of the conductors have mostly stayed the same, one can see the passion and respect for the conductors in the answers given by singers. Although the word "strict" still frequents the singers' answers, many described their conductor as a "father figure" or "mentor". Their comments prove the value of the vocal parenting philosophy discussed in chapter 2. Three descriptions are given as examples below.

One boys' school choir member wrote, "My choir conductor has an extraordinary impression on the entire choir. He provides a place for us to express ourselves while still maintaining a general sense of order." Note the personalised "*my* choir conductor", suggesting the very personal bond that this member feels with the conductor. Another comment from a boys' school participant reads, "He is like a best friend, brother and father at the same time. He is amazing

and his teaching is priceless. He loves, teaches, nurtures, respects and treats every single one equally. He is just amazing.” And finally, a boy from one of the mixed-gender schools wrote that although his conductor can be “infuriating” sometimes, “his love for music and passion for the choir is amazing. And he cares about us all deeply. I do love him.”

Naturally, the number of boys that used to sing choir in primary school did not change from the previous questionnaire. Twenty-nine percent (14 out of the 49 non-singers) indicated that they used to sing in their respective primary schools’ choirs. Reasons provided for leaving the choir not stated earlier was that “children in primary school laugh at choir boys”; and a “horrible conductor in primary school”. This reasoning made quite an impression on me, dawning the realization that I have put all my focus thus far in the self-image of boys in high school, while the core of this problem might be found much earlier. More on this in chapter 6.

To compare the two sets of data regarding the statements given in the questionnaires, I have prepared tables for visual aid. The descriptive statistics are firstly compared holistically (see table 5 below), whereafter I have compared the statistics for every separate statement, using both the t-test for dependent samples dialogue and the Wilcoxon Matched pair test. These tests are used to compare results by the same participants in two or more sessions. Finally, I also listed average scores for singers, non-singers, boys’ schools and boys from mixed-gender schools. I realize that the p-value in the t-tests for dependent samples and Wilcoxon tests displayed on pages 79-87 are normally used to test significance or validity, by showing that the two sets of data correspond with each other. This explains the caption “marked differences are significant at  $p < 0.05000$ ”, meaning that if the value of p is less than 0.05, there is a less than 5% (0.05) probability that the results gained from the research happened by chance. However, it could be quite possible that participants changed their minds in the course of 6 months. The reasons for changing their answers should be interesting to investigate further. My goal, in any case, is to see where the ratings lie, rather than the levels of correspondence. Considering the fact that the data used for the calculations of the average difference between the two rounds of questionnaires, the findings are only displayed in the bottom row of each table.

**Table 4.5 Holistic view of the descriptive statistics to question 17**

Variable	Descriptive Statistics				
	Valid N	Mean	Median	Lower Quartile	Upper Quartile
1 Singing is a feminine activity	166	2.333333	1.00000	1.00000	3.00000
2 Singing is a feminine activity	159	2.427673	1.00000	1.00000	3.00000
1 Sports are more masculine than choir	166	3.612121	2.00000	1.00000	5.00000
2 Sports are more masculine than choir	161	3.708075	3.00000	1.00000	6.00000
1 Choir + sport is more masculine than just sport	166	4.321212	4.00000	1.00000	7.00000
2 Choir + sport is more masculine than just sport	161	4.515528	4.00000	1.00000	7.00000
1 Bases more masculine than tenors	164	2.815951	1.00000	1.00000	4.00000
2 Bases more masculine than tenors	161	3.440994	2.00000	1.00000	5.00000
1 Embarrassing if girls hear you sing	163	3.481481	2.00000	1.00000	5.00000
2 Embarrassing if girls hear you sing	158	3.962025	2.00000	1.00000	5.00000
1 Joining because of friends joining	163	5.987654	6.00000	4.00000	9.00000
2 Joining because of friends joining	158	5.449367	5.00000	2.00000	9.00000

The first thing that I observed was that all the means are relatively low, ranging between 2 and 5 (out of a possible 10) for each answer. The statements were specifically chosen to test whether the stereotypical excuses for not participating in singing activities are still valid for high school boys, specifically in the South African environment. Clearly, the holistic view shows that these statements do not ring true for the participants. However, the different outlooks of the choir singers and non-singers, which were more significant, will be discussed separately (see page 88).

The first statement posed for rating was “singing is a feminine activity” (see tables 4.6 and 4.12). In the first round, 82% of the participants (136 boys) answered within one standard deviation (2.110248) from the mean. In the second round, this percentage shifted to 79% (126 participants). The interesting perception is that the ratings of those extra 3% answers that fell outside of the standard deviation in round 2 changed dramatically. Two choir singers in all-boys’ schools, for example, changed their rating from a 1 to a 7. More information is needed

to understand the drastic change of heart about this viewpoint, as the rest of their questionnaires do not show any conclusive evidence of a change of opinion about singing. Both are still in choir, still enjoy singing *et cetera*. It would have been insightful to be able to interview these boys to shed light on their answers.

The second statement; namely, “boys who do sports (e.g. rugby/hockey/cricket) are more manly than boys who sing in the choir” (see tables 4.7 and 4.13), was answered similarly. In the first round, 79% of the participants (131 boys) scored the statement within one standard deviation from the mean, while only 74% (119 boys) did so in the second round. Again, I suspect that this might have something to do with the fact that the winter sport season is in full swing during the time when the second round of research was conducted. This means that the image of the larger sport codes (i.e. rugby and hockey) could make the boys believe that participating in a sport contributes to a higher level of masculinity. However, it was interesting to note that the next question (whether boys who do sport and choir are more masculine than those who only sing in the choir, tables 4.8 and 4.14) were answered more consistently. In both rounds, between 44% - 45% of participants answered within one standard deviation from the mean.

The only statement where  $p$  was significant, according to the statistical analyses, was question 4. The numbers in these tables (tables 4.9 and 4.15) are marked in red for this reason. Participants had to rate whether bases are more masculine than tenors. In the first round, 84% of the participants (137 boys) answered within one standard deviation from the mean of 2.6. In the second round, 77% (122 boys) answered within one standard deviation of a higher mean of 3.4. With the mean increasing by a whole answer point, we can observe the same phenomenon as in previous questions, where the generalisation of a homogeneous masculinity is more apparent in the second round of data than the first. A box & whisker plot (graph 4.7) has also been included in presenting the data visually.

The fifth statement was “it is embarrassing if girls hear you sing” (see tables 4.10 and 4.16). In the first round, 80% of the participants (131 boys) answered within one standard deviation from the mean. The average was slightly lower during the second round, when 73% (114 boys) answered within one standard deviation of the mean. Finally, 62% of the participants (102 boys) answered within one standard deviation from the mean in the first round to the last statement, namely “If you are/were not in the choir and your best friend decided to join, you

would join the choir as well” (tables 4.11 and 4.17). During the second round, this number was substantially lower, at 47%, or 73 participants.

**Table 4.6 T-test: Singing is a feminine activity (question 17)**

T-test for Dependent Samples Marked differences are significant at $p < 0.05000$										
Variable	Mean	Std Dv	N	Diff	Std. Dv. Diff.	t	df	p	Confidence -95.000%	Confidence +95.000%
1 Singing is a feminine activity	2.383648	2.110248								
2 Singing is a feminine activity	2.427673	2.243018	159	-0.044025	2.496443	-0.222371	158	0.824312	-0.435055	0.347005

**Table 4.7 T-test: Sports are more masculine than choir (question 17)**

T-test for Dependent Samples Marked differences are significant at $p < 0.05000$										
Variable	Mean	Std Dv	N	Diff	Std. Dv. Diff.	t	df	p	Confidence -95.000%	Confidence +95.000%
1 Sports are more masculine than choir	3.670807	3.055275								
2 Sports are more masculine than choir	3.708075	3.007573	161	-0.037267	4.027853	-0.117399	160	0.906691	-0.664178	0.589644



**Table 4.8 T-test: Choir + sport more masculine than just choir (question 17)**

T-test for Dependent Samples Marked differences are significant at $p < 0.05000$										
Variable	Mean	Std Dv	N	Diff	Std. Dv. Diff.	t	df	p	Confidence -95.000%	Confidence +95.000%
1 Choir+sport more masculine than just choir	4.341615	3.174322								
2 Choir+sport more masculine than just choir	4.515528	3.221230	161	-0.173913	4.199055	-0.525525	160	0.599946	-0.827471	0.479645

**Table 4.9 T-test: Bases more masculine than tenors (question 17)**

T-test for Dependent Samples Marked differences are significant at $p < 0.05000$										
Variable	Mean	Std Dv	N	Diff	Std. Dv. Diff.	t	df	p	Confidence -95.000%	Confidence +95.000%
1 Bases more masculine than tenors	2.849057	2.639018								
2 Bases more masculine than tenors	3.459119	2.999456	159	-0.610063	3.578968	-2.14939	158	0.033126	-1.17065	-0.049471

**Table 4.10 T-test: Embarrassing if girls hear you sing (question 17)**

T-test for Dependent Samples Marked differences are significant at $p < 0.05000$										
Variable	Mean	Std Dv	N	Diff	Std. Dv. Diff.	t	df	p	Confidence -95.000%	Confidence +95.000%
1 Embarrassing if girls hear you sing	3.535484	3.000600								
2 Embarrassing if girls hear you sing	3.896774	3.077303	155	-0.361290	3.940934	-1.14136	154	0.255491	-0.986618	0.264037

**Table 4.11 T-test: Joining because of friends joining (question 17)**

T-test for Dependent Samples Marked differences are significant at $p < 0.05000$										
Variable	Mean	Std Dv	N	Diff	Std. Dv. Diff.	t	df	p	Confidence -95.000%	Confidence +95.000%
1 Joining because of friends joining	6.032258	3.109306								
2 Joining because of friends joining	5.477419	3.387018	155	0.554839	3.879922	1.780367	154	0.076988	-0.060808	1.170485

**Table 4.12 Wilcoxon: Singing is a feminine activity (question 17)**

Pair of Variables	Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Test			
	Valid N	T	Z	p-value
Singing is a feminine activity (1 and 2)	89	1995.500	0.028639	0.977152

**Table 4.13 Wilcoxon: Sports are more masculine than choir (question 17)**

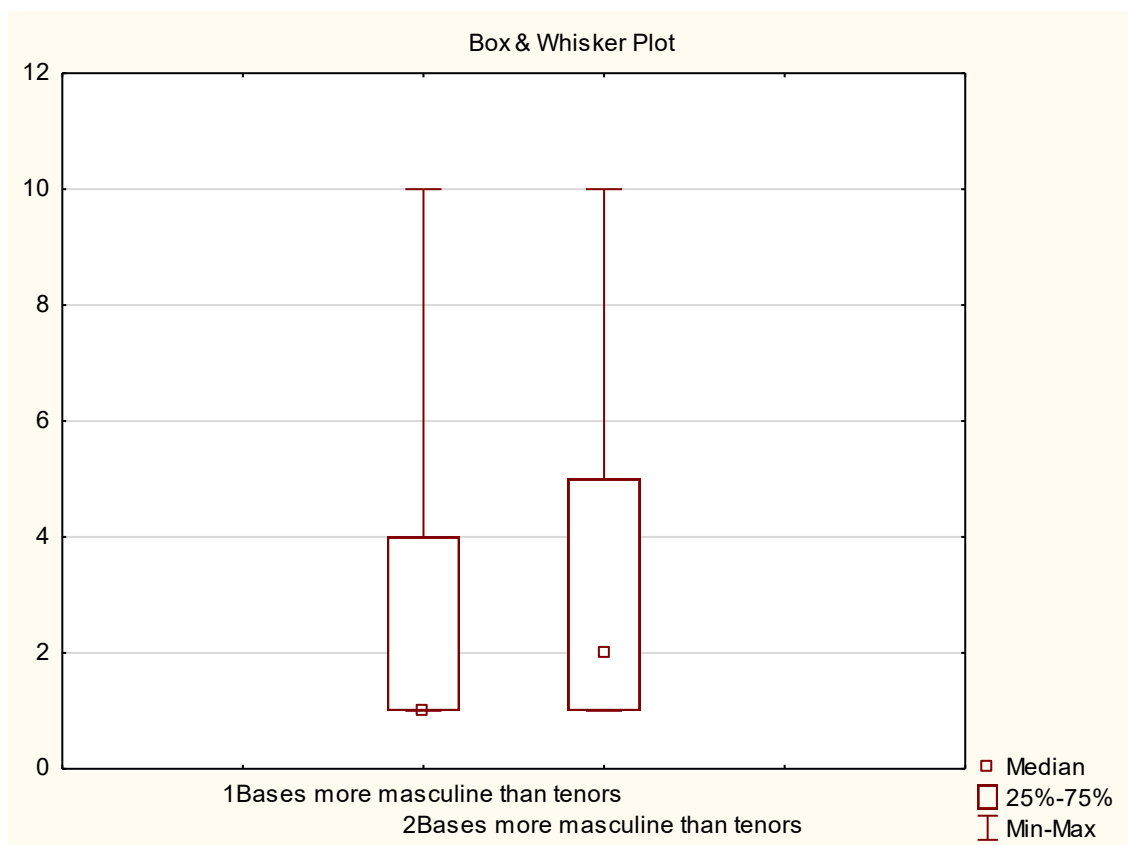
Pair of Variables	Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Test			
	Valid N	T	Z	p-value
Sports are more masculine than choir (1 and 2)	121	3589.000	0.262540	0.792905

**Table 4.14 Wilcoxon: Choir + sport more masculine than just choir (question 17)**

Pair of Variables	Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Test			
	Valid N	T	Z	p-value
Choir+sport more masculine than just choir (1 and 2)	130	4059.000	0.461252	0.644618

**Table 4.15 Wilcoxon: Bases more masculine than tenors (question 17)**

Pair of Variables	Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Test			
	Valid N	T	Z	p-value
Bases more masculine than tenors (1 and 2)	110	2337.000	2.133837	0.032857



**Graph 4.7 Box and Whiskers Plot: Bases more masculine than tenors (question 17)**

**Table 4.16 Wilcoxon: Embarrassing if girls hear you sing (question 17)**

Pair of Variables	Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Test			
	Valid N	T	Z	p-value
Embarrassing if girls hear you sing (1 and 2)	118	3124.500	1.036583	0.299931

**Table 4.17 Wilcoxon: Joining because of friends joining (question 17)**

Pair of Variables	Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Test			
	Valid N	T	Z	p-value
Joining because of friends joining (1 and 2)	127	3345.000	1.730046	0.083623

I have divided the ratings into two tables below. Table 4.18 compares the views of choir singers versus non-singers, while table 4.19 compares all boys' school participants versus those who attend a mixed-gender school. The first observation is, again, that almost all the means are low to very low, apart from the question about joining the choir if a best friend decided to join. However, now we can see a clear difference in the scores given by singers versus non-singers, or all-boys' school boys versus those in mixed-gender schools.

The difference in answers between the choir singers and non-singers to the first statement was interesting to note. Whereas my previous observation was that, holistically, boys do not feel that singing is a feminine activity, one can clearly see that non-singers rated that question much higher than the choristers. This phenomenon occurs throughout all the questions, except the last one, where the average choir singer scored a much higher rating. Even though the means are still relatively low, the difference in opinion must be noted here. This will be discussed further in chapter 6.

The difference in scoring between all-boys' school boys and boys attending a mixed-gender school appears less conclusive, but still deserves some discussion. It seems that the singular definition of masculinity, as analysed in the literature review, is to be found more in the all-boys' schools, rather than in mixed-gender schools. However, it seems that there are equal levels of embarrassment when girls hear the participants sing. The notion of joining choir if a best friend joins, was also answered relatively equally.

**Table 4.18 Choir singers vs. non-singers (question 17)**

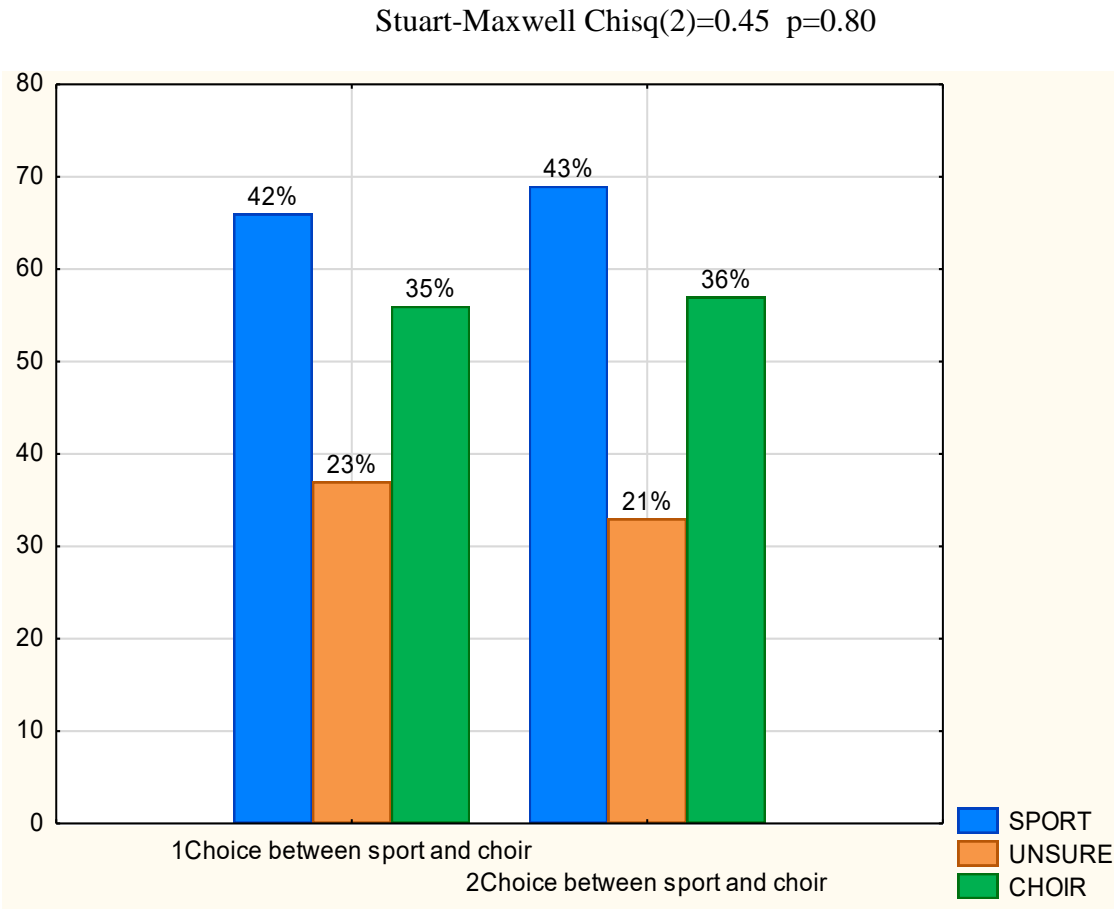
Variables	Choir singers			Non-singers		
	1	2	Diff	1	2	Diff
Singing is a feminine activity	1.5	1.8	+ 0.3	4.2	3.8	- 0.4
Boys who play sports are more masculine than boys who sing in the choir	2.7	3.2	+ 0.5	4.5	4.8	+ 0.3
Choir members who also do a sport are more masculine than boys who only sing in the choir	3.8	4.3	+ 0.5	5.4	5.0	-0.4
Bases are more masculine than tenors	2.3	3.1	+ 0.8	3.6	4.2	+ 0.6
It is embarrassing if girls hear you sing	2.6	3.2	+ 0.6	5.7	5.8	+ 0.1
If you are/were not in the choir and your best friend decided to join, you would join as well	7.0	6.2	- 0.8	4.5	3.8	- 0.7

**Table 4.19 All-boys' vs. mixed-gender schools (question 17)**

Variables	All-boys'			Mixed gender		
	1	2	Diff	1	2	Diff
Singing is a feminine activity	2.5	2.6	+ 0.1	1.7	1.8	+ 0.1
Boys who play sports are more masculine than boys who sing in the choir	3.8	3.9	+ 0.1	3.0	3.1	+ 0.1
Choir members who also do a sport are more masculine than boys who only sing in the choir	4.6	4.8	+ 0.2	3.4	3.8	+ 0.4
Bases are more masculine than tenors	3.3	3.7	+ 0.4	1.8	2.8	+ 1.0
It is embarrassing if girls hear you sing	3.2	4.1	+ 0.9	3.4	3.7	+ 0.3
If you are/were not in the choir and your best friend decided to join, you would join as well	7.8	5.4	- 2.8	5.8	5.7	- 0.1

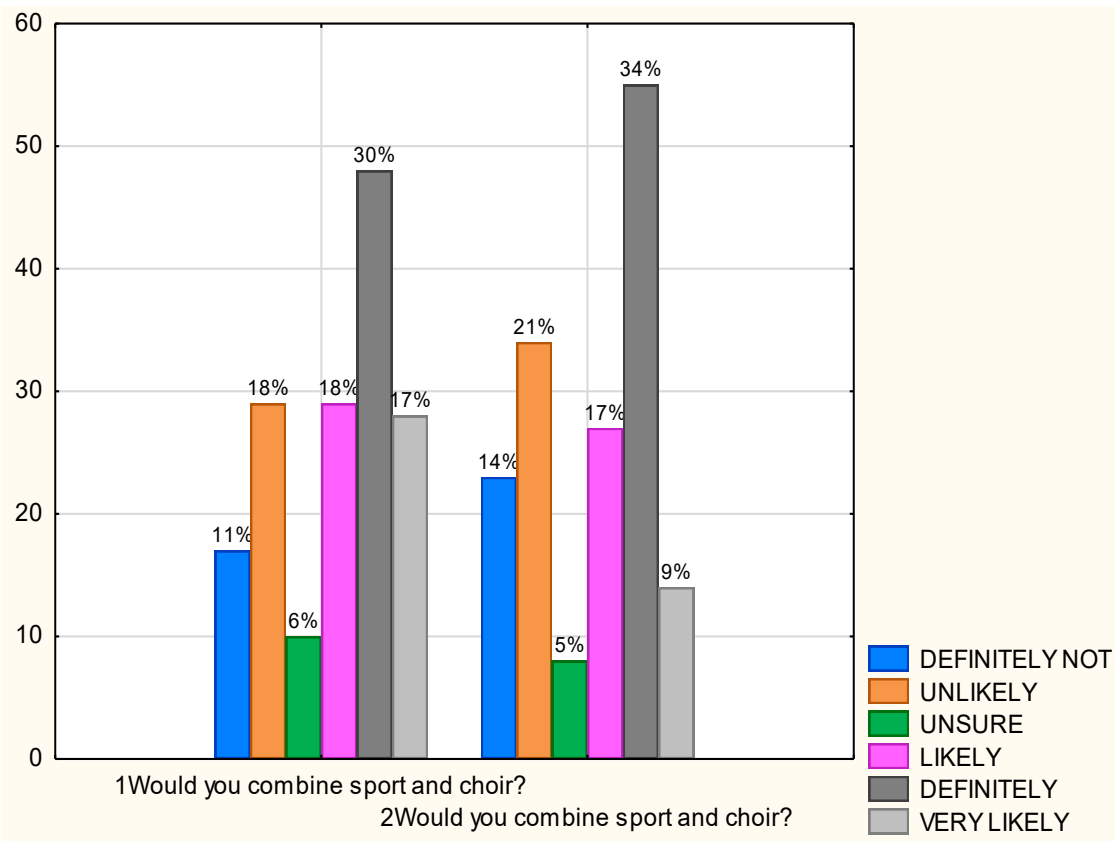


Finally, 10% of the non-singers (5 boys) stated that they were “unsure” of what they would choose between choir and sport, while the rest preferred sport. At the other end of the spectrum, 25% of the choir boys (20) from all-boys’ schools preferred sport; 19% (15) were unsure, and the rest (56% or 45 boys) preferred choir to sport. Forty-one percent of the participants from mixed-gender schools (13 boys) also chose choir, with 19% (6 boys) preferring sport and another 13 boys being unsure. It intrigued me to find out whether there was a shift in preferred activities during the 6 months, with rugby season in full swing at the schools. Indeed, seven boys choosing choir in February 2019 (during the first round of data collection) changed their minds to being unsure now; and three now preferred sport. Three choir boys, who used to be unsure, would now prefer sport. However, four participants stated that they chose sport in February, but now were unsure which activity they would choose. One changed his preference from sport to choir, and eleven boys went from being unsure in February, to choosing choir now. The data is presented visually in graph 4.8 below.



***Graph 4.8 Choice between sport and choir***

This time, 34% of the participants (55 boys) indicated that they would definitely combine sport and choir, if the option was available to them. Nine percent (14 boys) deemed the combination “very likely” and another 17% (27 boys) thought that they would likely do both. A total of 60% of all participants are therefore open to the idea of combining sport and choir – a decrease of 5% from the 65% in February. Twenty-one percent (34 boys) stated the combination being unlikely and 14% (23 boys) expressed that they are definitely not open to the possibility of combining sport and choir. Eight participants crossed the “unsure” block.

Stuart-Maxwell  $\chi^2(5)=6.77$   $p=0.24$ 

***Graph 4.9 Likelihood of combining sport and choir***

The discussion of section C of the questionnaire, where participants had to draw a picture of themselves before and after the process of voice change, will be discussed in the next chapter. Then, taking everything into account, chapter 6 will follow with my perceptions, conclusions and recommendations for further study.

## CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS (PART 2)

### 5.1 Introduction

In the book *The Girl that Spoke with Pictures: Autism through Art*, Eileen Miller (2008) gives an account of how her autistic daughter, Kim, communicated through drawings even when she almost did not speak at all. Miller is often quoted as saying, “Art can permeate the very deepest part of us, where no words exist” (Hinrichs, 2014:210). We also know from research (e.g. Steffani & Selvester, 2009:126) that small children start drawing long before they have the ability to start writing in coherent sentences and that drawing pictures may even be seen as a tool to learn to start writing. Furthermore, recent studies posit that drawing pictures is a necessary and valuable skill throughout different developmental stages in order to communicate important non-verbal details (Christianakis, 2011:23). Drawings, and art in general, have been found to “reconcile emotional conflicts”, as well as helping to improve creative thinking and other areas of scholastic life (Cortina & Fazel, 2015:36).

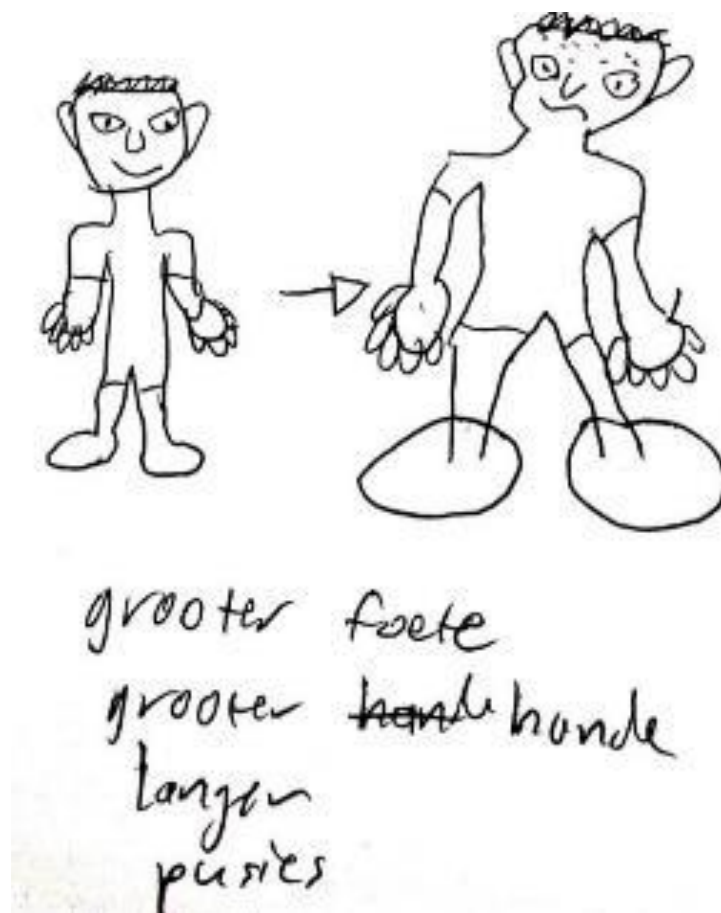
Art therapy, and the psychological analysis of drawings, is a relatively new and specialized field in South Africa. It has been used with great success in trauma counselling (Trangoš, 2016), but I struggled to find evidence of it being used in this specific field, except of course counting the Freer/Bennett study (2012) mentioned previously. It is important to realize that this tool is not usually applied in isolation and art therapists advise that, without knowing and understanding the proper context, one cannot fully analyse any drawings, as conclusions could be made that are very far from the truth (refer to the explanation in the chapter on methodology, chapter 2). However, taking the risks into consideration, I was still very interested to see if the answers to section C of the questionnaire, in which the participants had to draw themselves before and after voice change, would give further insight into their feelings surrounding voice change that they could not have necessarily put into words. Although it is becoming clear that many children are losing the ability to think creatively and present a visual account from memory, because of the influence of technology (Winterstein & Jungwirth, 2006:206), enough valid data remained for me to analyse. After careful exploration, the majority of the images could be categorized, based on the overall themes depicted in the drawings. I have therefore divided the drawings into four categories, namely

(5.1.1) physical changes; (5.1.2) psychological changes, (5.1.3) vocal changes, and (5.1.4) no perceived changes.

### **5.1.1 Physical changes**

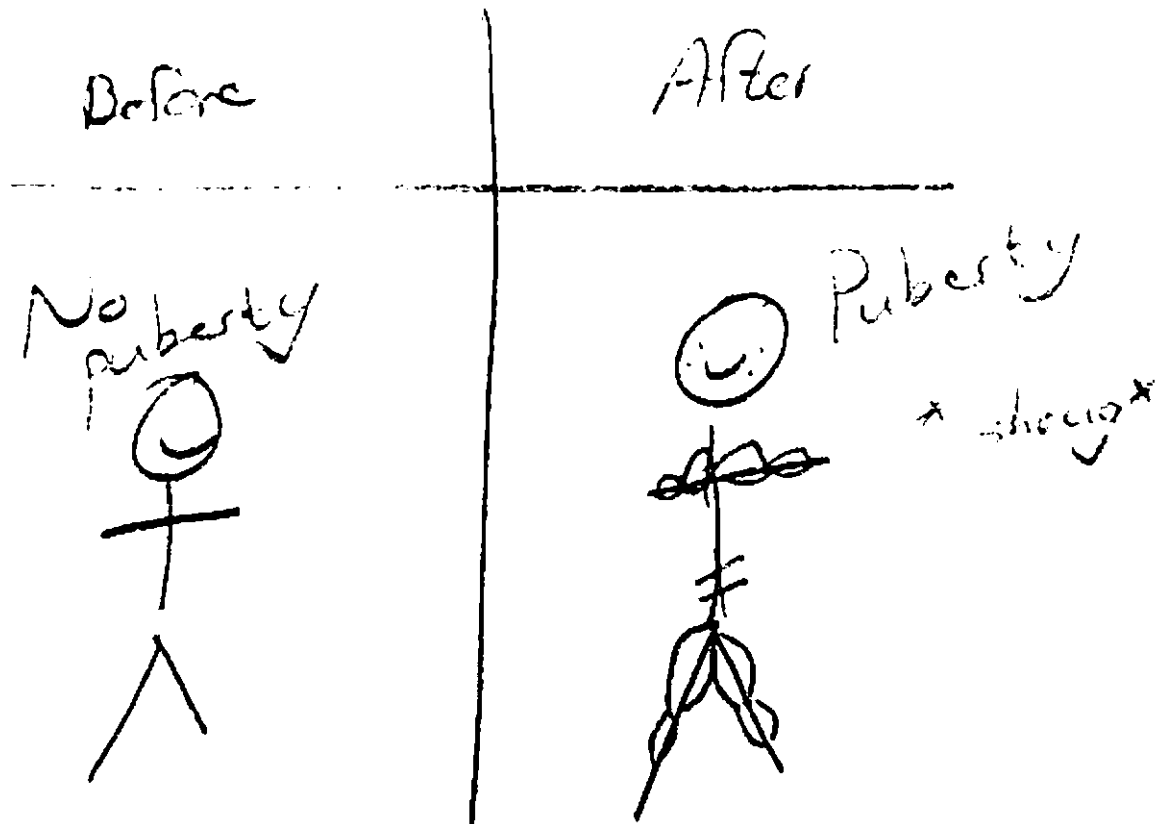
The first category consists of drawings illustrating the physical changes that a boy goes through when reaching puberty. Although the instructions in the questionnaire only used the words “voice change”, a significant amount of the drawings showed other changes the adolescent’s body goes through. One aspect that was highlighted repeatedly, was the presence of muscles. These participants are therefore very much aware that voice change is part of the bigger process of puberty and adolescence. It may also show the pride that these boys have of “becoming men” and of reaching that ideal possible self. These ideas can be seen in examples 1 - 7 discussed and depicted on the following pages.

Example 1: A non-singer from a mixed-gender school drew figure 5.1 (below), with caption “grooter foete, grooter hande, langer, puisies” (sic) (larger feet, larger hands, taller, pimples). Drawing his limbs (hands and feet) excessively big as adolescent may suggest that he is unsure of himself, or that he sees himself as clumsy. The way that his body is leaning over adds to the sense of being uncomfortable. Note the fact that the boy on the left is smiling, while the adolescent on the right seems confused or unhappy. This will be discussed further in the section on psychological changes (5.1.2). Interestingly, this participant indicated that he experienced the voice-changing process as “neutral” and that he did not even realize at first that his voice was changing. However, when looking at the drawing, his uncertainty towards the process is clearly visible. This discrepancy between the written answers given by the respondents and the emotions surfacing in their drawings is something that was encountered quite a few times and will be examined in detail in chapter 6.



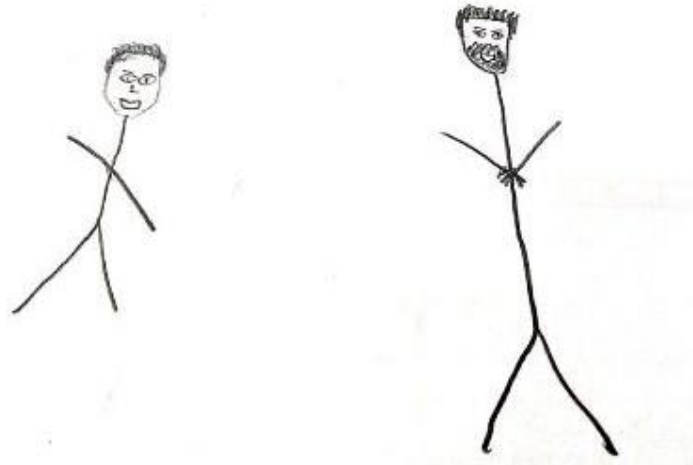
*Figure 5.1 Larger feet and hands*

Example 2: A choir singer, also from a mixed-gender school, associated muscles with voice change, as it is all part of the changes that the body goes through during puberty (see figure 5.2). Note the absence of eyes in both pictures, possibly meaning that this specific boy feels “unseen”, or that he does not want to be the focus of attention. The addition of the word *\*shrug\** is also interesting. It may be as simple as to suggest that this participant did not really know what to draw. However, the action of shrugging may also point to the image of indifference that so many teenagers want to portray. Again, note that the commentary given by the wording and the image are once more very different in nature.



*Figure 5.2 Muscles*

Example 3 and 4: Two non-singers from all-boys schools also drew two stick men, but accentuated bodily hair appearing on the face and under the arms during puberty. The figure on the right is drawn more clearly in both cases, using thicker lines. This can mean that these participants experience the process as positive, as if they feel more important or definitive after going through voice change. Also note the reference to masculinity in figure 5.4 (I used to be “soft”, now I am “more manly”) and the smile on the face of the figure on the right.



*Figure 5.3 Bodily hair*

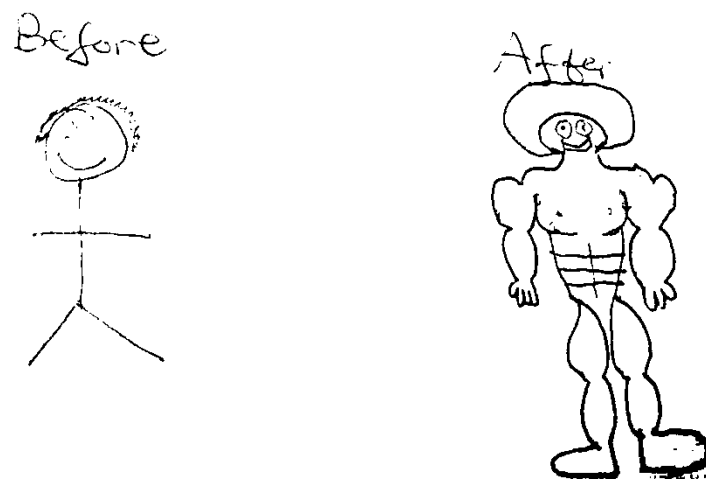


Before : I had no haire anywhere. I was soft.  
 After : I grow more hare under my armer. I grew a beard  
 And I am more manly.

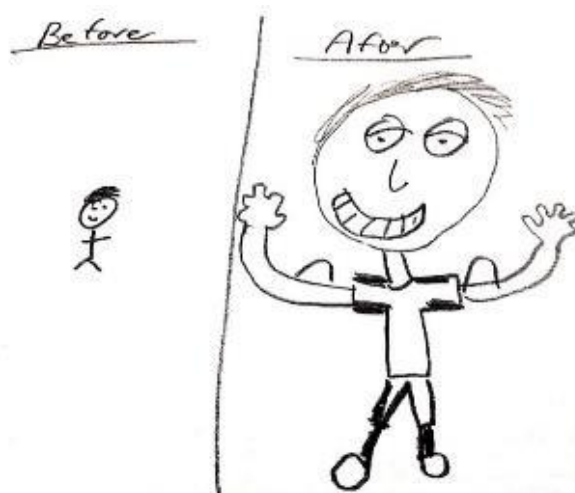
*Figure 5.4 Hairy and manly*



Example 5 and 6: The following two drawings (figures 5.5 and 5.6), both done by choir singers from the two different boys' schools, show transformation from a stick man to a two-dimensional drawing with much more attention to detail. This could refer to greater confidence in the self (explained under the section of psychological changes, 5.1.2). In both cases, the figure on the right is also drawn much larger than the figure on the left. This accentuates the feeling of being “bigger” or, again, more manly. Note the absence of ears in both these drawings. These participants may feel as if they are not being heard, or even as if they want to do things their own way and not listen to others.

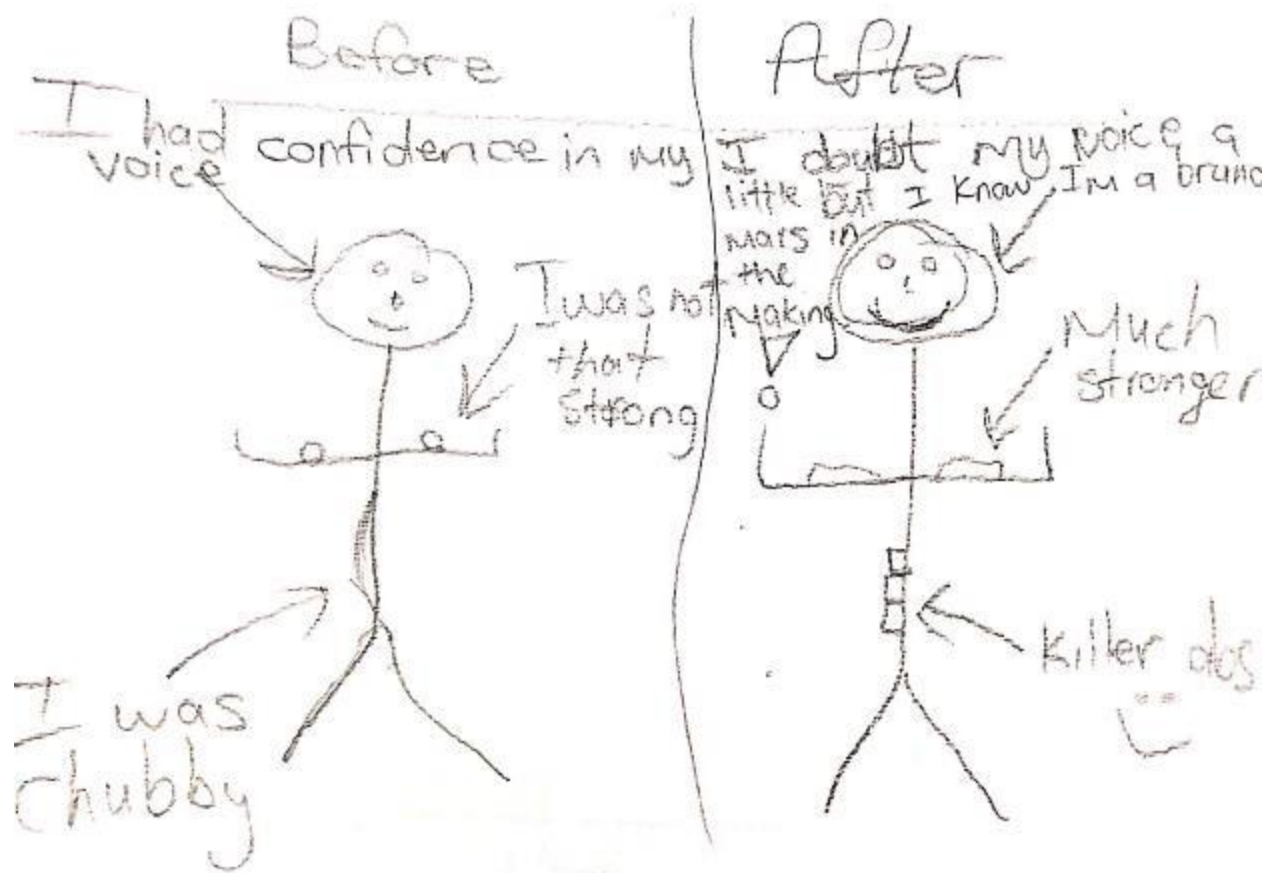


*Figure 5.5 Body builder*



*Figure 5.6 Biceps*

Example 7: A few boys seeming somewhat overweight before puberty also acknowledge losing weight during the process. In figure 5.7, the “after” image seems much happier than before. He does confess that he doubts his voice a little, but that he has confidence in the process. Notice the bigger smile in his “after” figure. In his questionnaire, this participant confessed that he would like to do both choir and sport, although the choir’s rehearsal times were “killing” him. The picture confirms that he is taking sports training seriously (referring to the “killer abs” comment on the drawing on the right).



**Figure 5.7 From "chubby" to "killer abs"**

### 5.1.2 Psychological changes

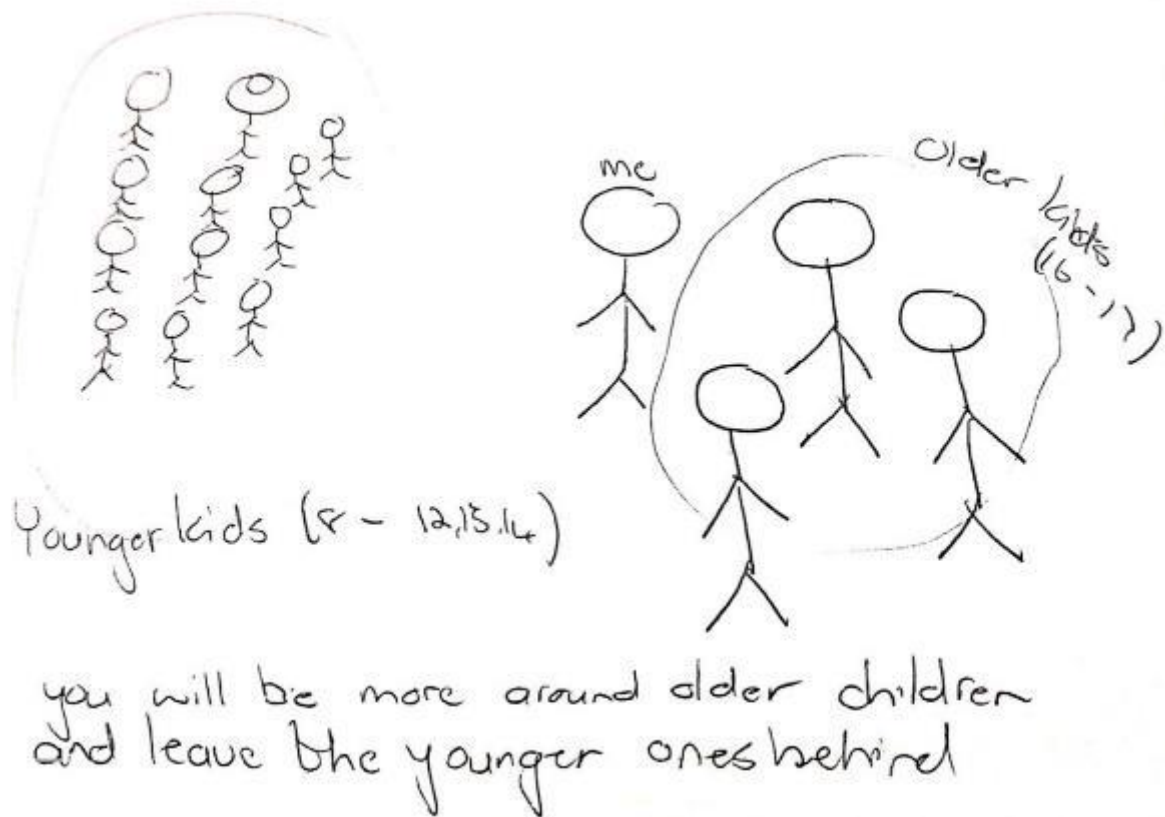
The next group of images shows participants who expressed something of their feelings towards the process. They were able to dig deeper than face value and portray the emotions behind going through voice change, and adolescence as a whole. Two opposing viewpoints could be distinguished here. Many drawings in this category communicate the transition from child to man as being positive (see examples 8 – 13); however, some images (see examples 14 – 17) hinted at a form of an unhealthy identity formation. As discussed in chapter 3, this phenomenon occurs when the person either develops a negative self-image, or takes on a prescribed identity without questioning.

Example 8: The following drawings show pride at “becoming a man”, or an increase in self-confidence. The caption of figure 5.8 reads “before the change, I felt small and like a small boy. After the change I felt bigger and more like a man”. Note the figure on the left-hand side slouching and looking unhappy, versus the proud and happy stance of the “after” figure on the right.



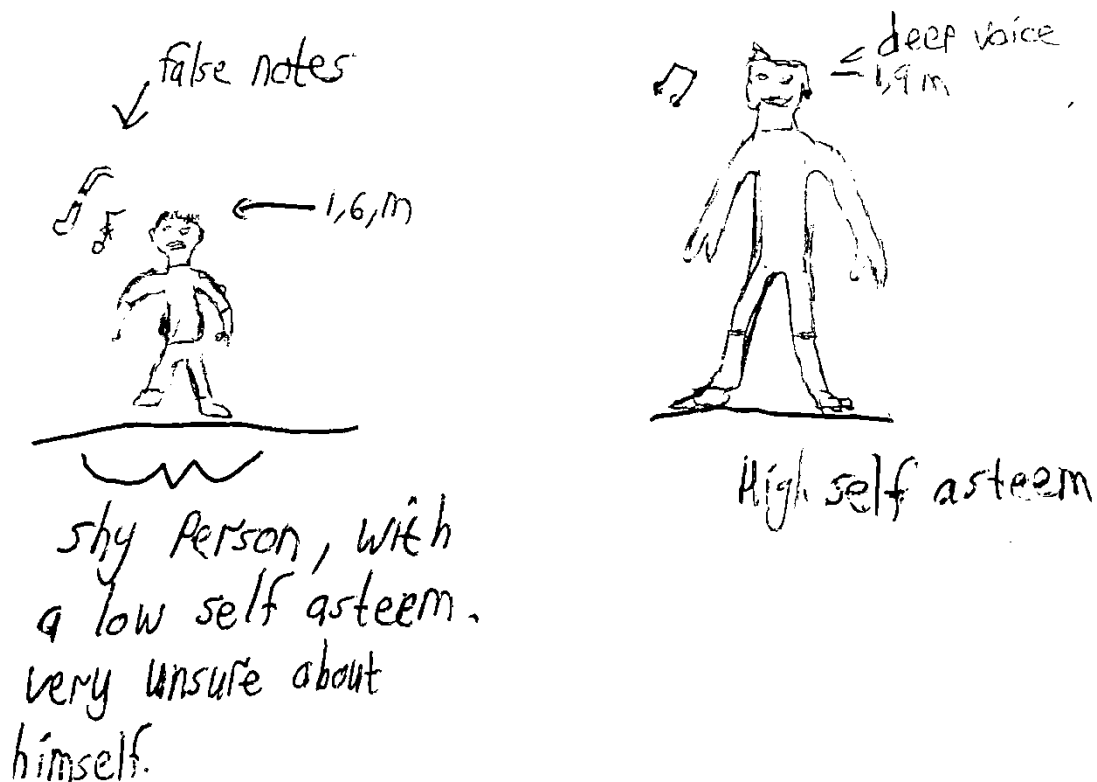
*Figure 5.8 Becoming a man*

Example 9: For the next participant (figure 5.9), growing up also meant associating himself with older people. I suspect that he is socially aware, as the physical changes do not bother him as much as being accepted in the older peer group. In his questionnaire, he also indicated that the aspect he likes the most about his changed voice is that he “sounds older” than he is. It is interesting to note that all the people in his drawing are faceless. This may mean that the prospect of being accepted in the older peer group, and taking on the identity of the group, is more important than the shaping of his individual identity.



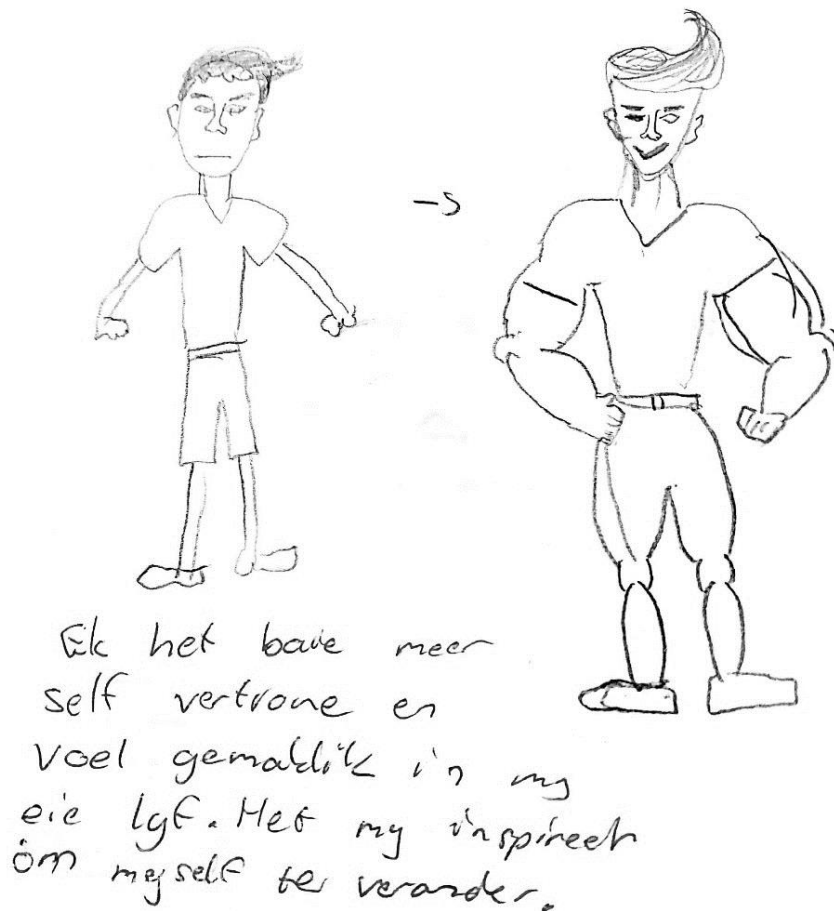
**Figure 5.9 Leave the younger ones behind**

Example 10: Both figures 5.10 and 5.11 (below) were made by choir singers. It is evident that they associate their voice change with gaining more self-confidence. The drawing on the right (figure 5.10) is, again, much taller and drawn with much more detail than the one on the left, confirming the explanation of “high self-esteem”. Interestingly, the figure on the left is definitely wearing pants and a shirt of some kind, while the only illusion of clothes I can see on the right is a neckline. However, he chose not to include any anatomical details. Normally, leaving out a part of the self points to uncertainty of some sort. Naturally, this observation may be disputed, as it could also just be as simple as a quick drawing and, because he wanted to focus on the psychological details, he left out details that he deemed as less important.



*Figure 5.10 Self-esteem*

Example 11: The written explanation with figure 5.11 (below) reads, “I have more self-confidence and I am comfortable in my own body. Inspired me to change myself.” One can clearly see the difference between these two drawings. The boy on the left is not smiling, his hair is untidy, and he is standing with his arms at a very weird and awkward angle. The boy on the right is very sure of himself, with a fashionable haircut and standing in a bodybuilder position.

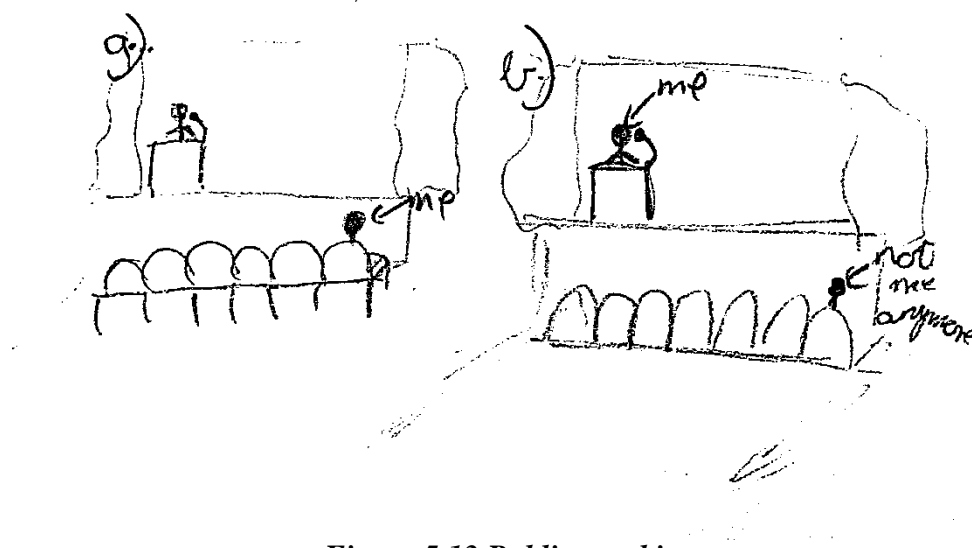


*Figure 5.11 Comfortable in my body*

Examples 12 and 13: The following drawings (figure 5.12 and 5.13) also illustrate self-confidence, in showing that the respective participants are not scared to speak their mind, either in a one-to-one setup, or even with public speaking. The drawing on the right in figure 5.12 is portrayed as commanding, with his outstretched arm positioned in such a way that it looks as if he is giving out orders. The caption, translated to English, reads “easier to speak your mind”. The participant in figure 5.13 used to be in the crowd, listening to others, while he is now the one on the stage, speaking to the crowd. However, note the colouring in of the faces in both drawings, which may refer to anxiety or discomfort.

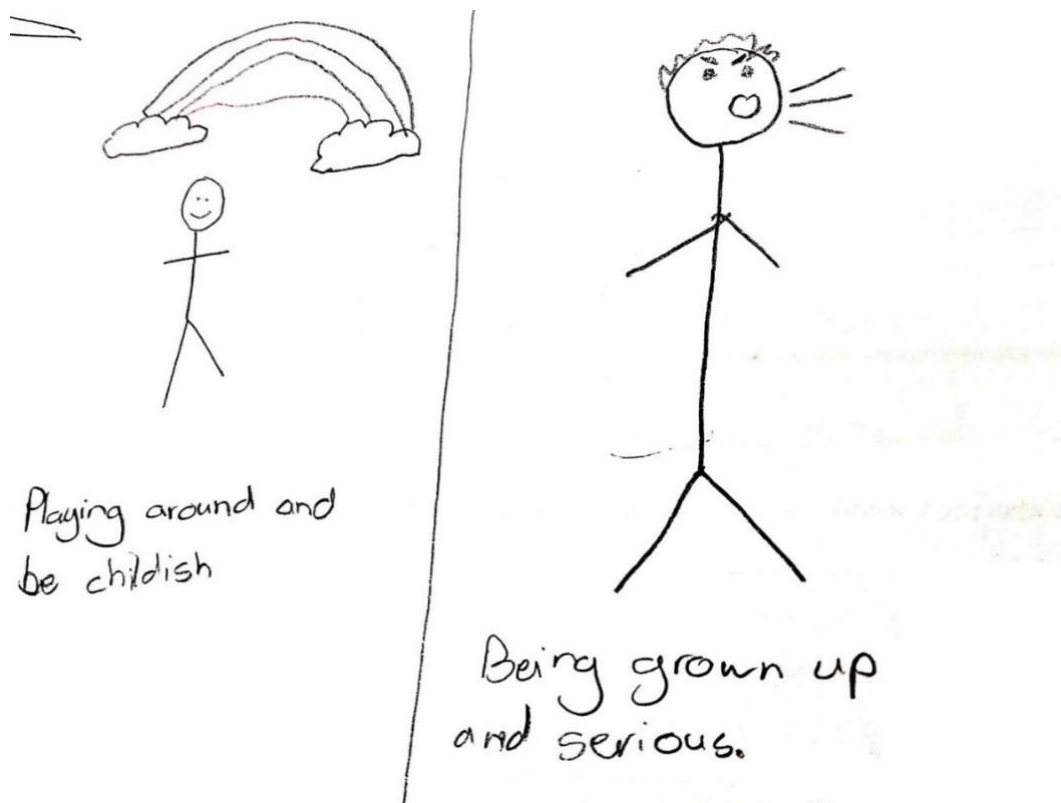


*Figure 5.12 Speaking your mind*



*Figure 5.13 Public speaking*

Example 14: On the other hand, the time of voice change can also be associated with an uncertainty or loss of identity, or changing one's identity into something that you perceive to be "adult-like". The next participant (figure 5.14), a non-singer from an all boys' school, expresses the view that adults are always "serious". However, he seems to prefer the image of seriousness, over being what he calls "childish". Instead of describing the picture on the left as being "a child" or "child-like", he chose "childish", a word with negative connotations. Interestingly, his voice had not started changing yet at the time of the questionnaire. I suspect that he himself felt "childish", while all of his peers were visibly and audibly growing up.



*Figure 5.14 Grown up and serious*



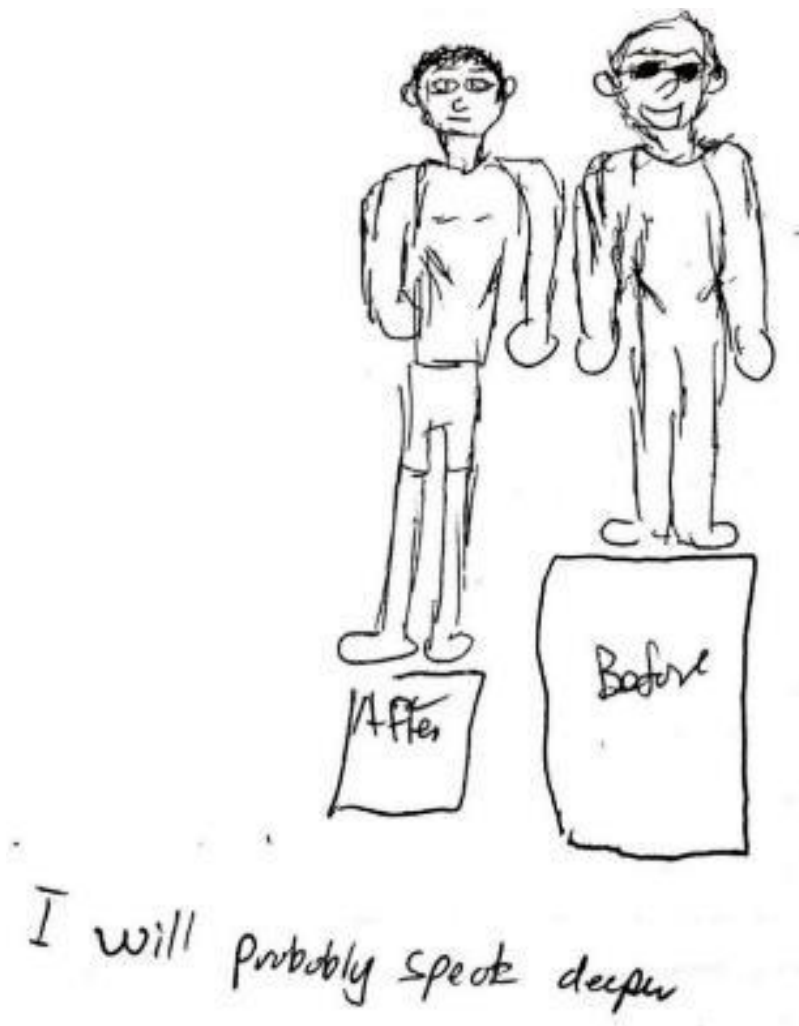
Example 15: Figure 5.15 also distinguishes being “very happy” as a child to being “normal” after voice change. This drawing was made by a choir singer from a mixed-gender school. He indicated that he liked his previous voice more, and he rated his experience of voice change as “very negative”. He also admits to being uncomfortable with his changed voice. Notice the figure on the right’s facial features being smaller than the one on the left. I believe that this may confirm his insecurity towards the process associated with adolescence.



**Figure 5.15 Normal**

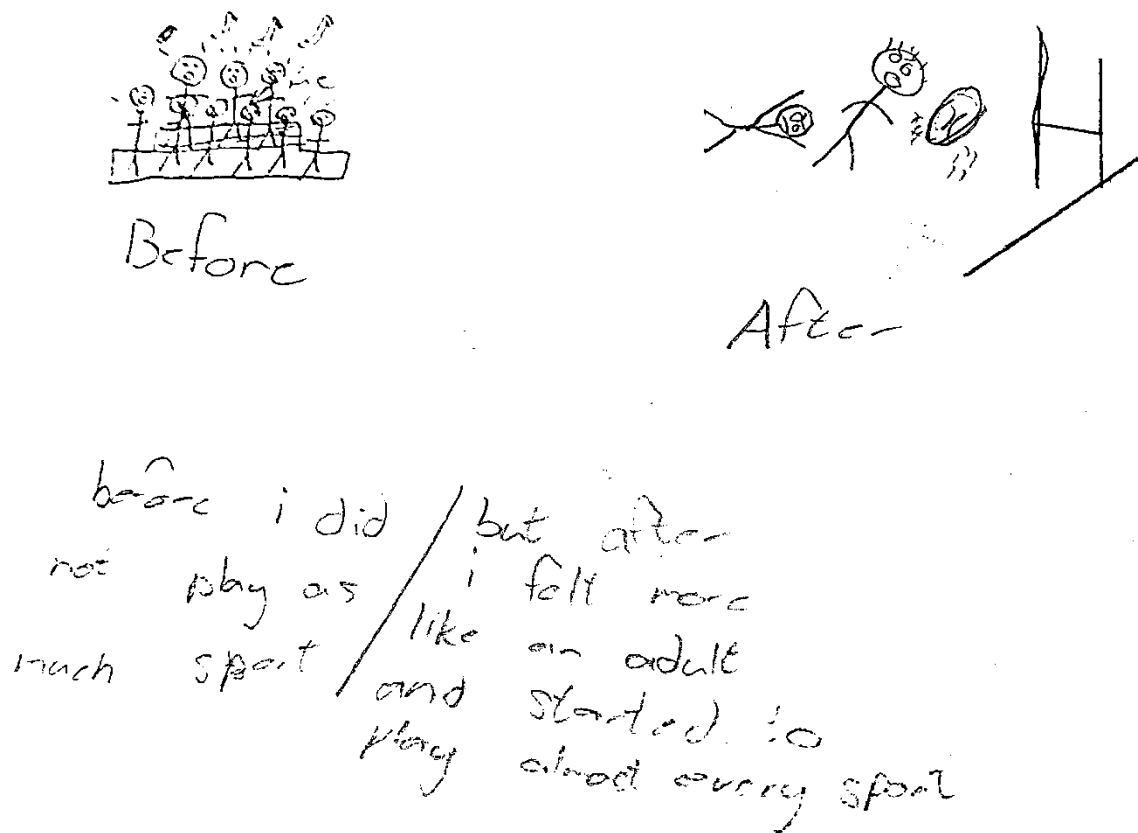
Example 16: In figure 5.16, notice once more the child smiling and looking much more confident on the right. He is wearing sunglasses; his hair is neat and he is drawn in relatively good proportions. On the left, however, the grown-up is serious, with a lot of detail put into drawing sad eyes. His body is also out of proportion, with very lean legs, long neck and one arm shorter than the other. His head is also smaller, and his hair is unkempt. I suspect that this participant does not feel comfortable at all in his changing body. The short and broken lines that he uses for his drawing could also be indicative of nervousness, or irrational thought processes. Very interestingly, this choir-singer indicated that he experienced voice-change positively, and that he likes his current voice more, saying that it made him seem “more confident”. I suspect that there might be a deeper need for self-expression with this participant, beyond merely saying what he believes needs to be said.

Figure 5.16 is also one of only seven drawings where the “before” is on the right and “after” on the left. In this particular drawing, it looks like the respondent started on the left and crossed something out (the crossed-out part was not added to the picture included here). However, this supposed switching of the sides is interesting to note. I suppose the easiest explanation would be that these seven participants are left-handed, owing to results in previous studies that prove that left-handed people tend to draw “asymmetrical” or “reversed” (Mori, 2012:138). Some scholars suggest that people with a mother tongue that is read from right to left have an altered visuospatial attention system, which could also explain the seemed reversed pictures (Afsari, Ossandón, & König, 2016). However, there is no way to prove this without personal contact.



*Figure 5.16 Deeper and serious*

Example 17: The next drawing, made by a non-singer from a mixed-gender school, was very interesting to analyse. The caption reads, “before I did not play as much sport/but after I felt more like an adult and started to play almost every sport”. The text motivates his decision for focussing on sport, because he felt grown up. However, when studying the image, one cannot help but see the tight-knit group he was a part of (even identifying himself in the image) on the left. He spent much more time on details in that part of the drawing as well. Comparing this to the image on the right, it does not look like he feels like part of a group now, as he did not draw his rugby team, compared to how he drew his fellow choir members. His face does not look happy or excited in the image on the right, even though he is so near to the goal posts. This seems to me like he is doing sport because that is “what men do”, although missing the camaraderie of a choir.



**Figure 5.17 Missing camaraderie**

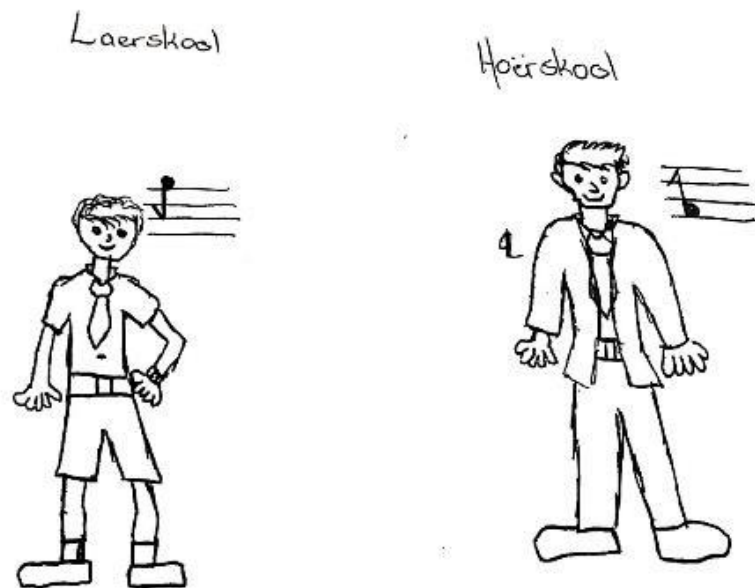
### 5.1.3 Vocal changes

In the third category, participants focussed specifically on their voices. Some felt that the deeper voice helped them to sing better, and others were still finding their new voice, and were uncertain when singing. Naturally, most of the drawings in this category were made by choir singers, as voice change in itself is a very significant process for them.

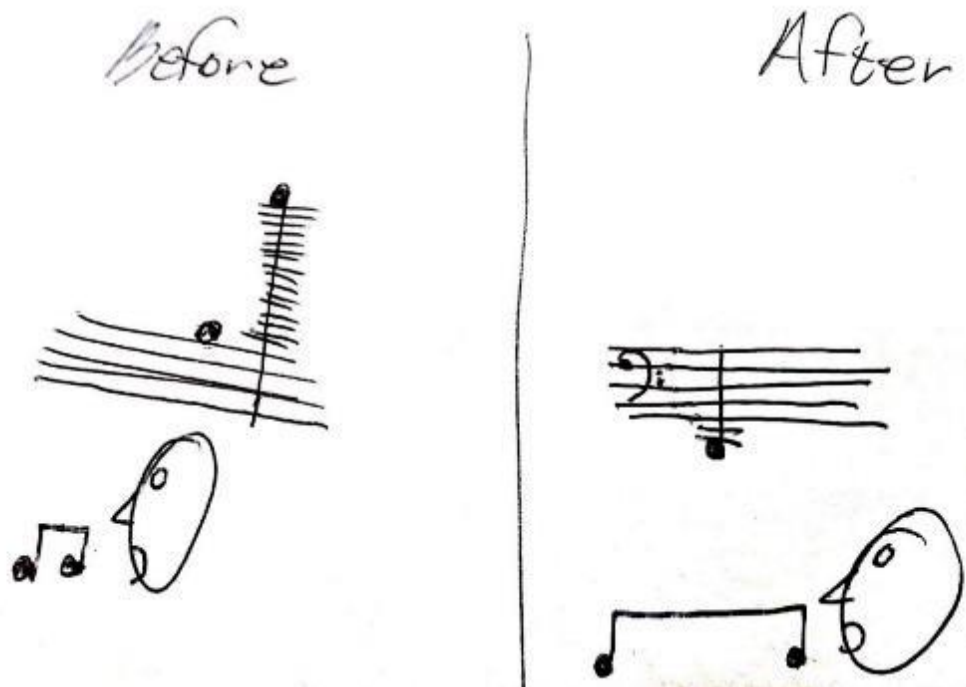
Examples 18 – 20: Figures 5.18 and 5.19 address the range of the voice lowering, while figure 5.20 also illustrates better lung capacity and breath control. The singer in figure 5.18 seems confused with his lower range (by the way that his one eyebrow is lifted). It might also suggest feeling uncomfortable while singing, possibly due to the fact that the process is not quite finished yet. Note the blazer that is worn when the boy in figure 5.19 reaches high school, suggesting that he is growing up and dressing more like a man. His hair is also neatly styled in high school, versus having longer, unkempt hair in primary school. These figures show a certain level of knowledge about notation, with correctly drawn notes and even a well-formed bass clef in figure 5.20. after confused



*Figure 5.18 Voice lowering*

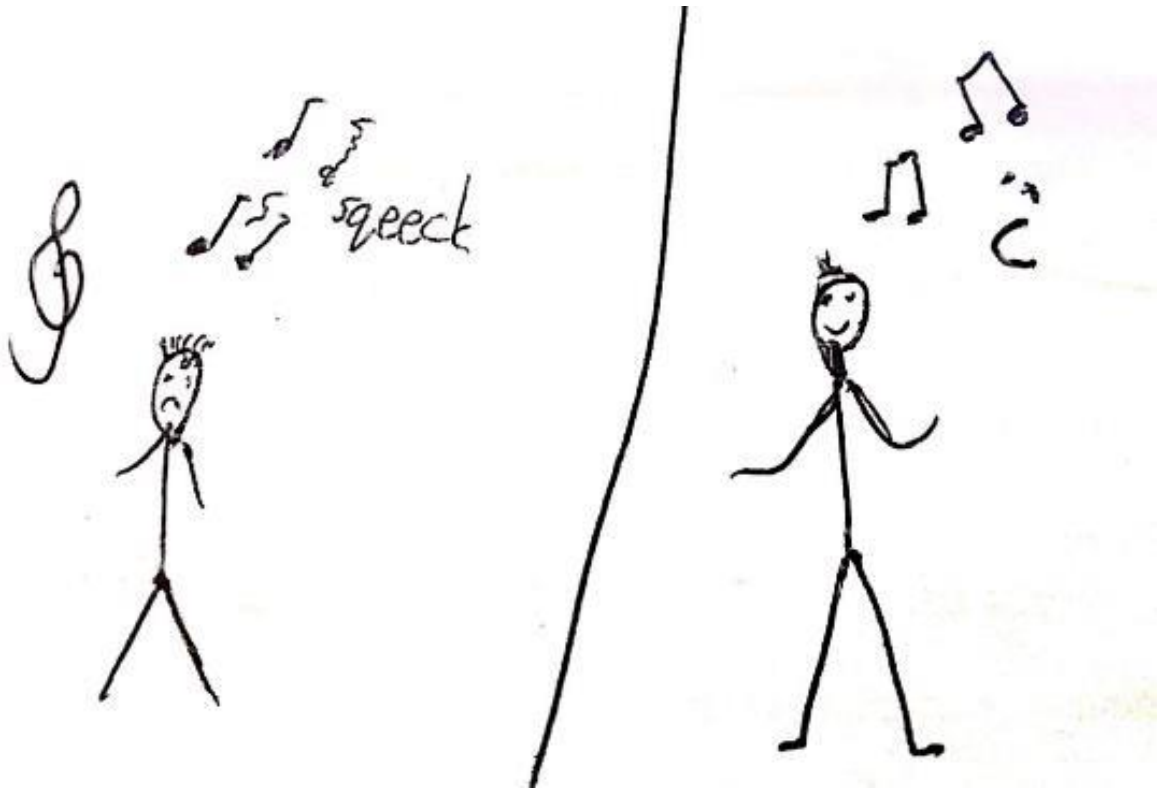


*Figure 5.19 Primary vs. high school range*



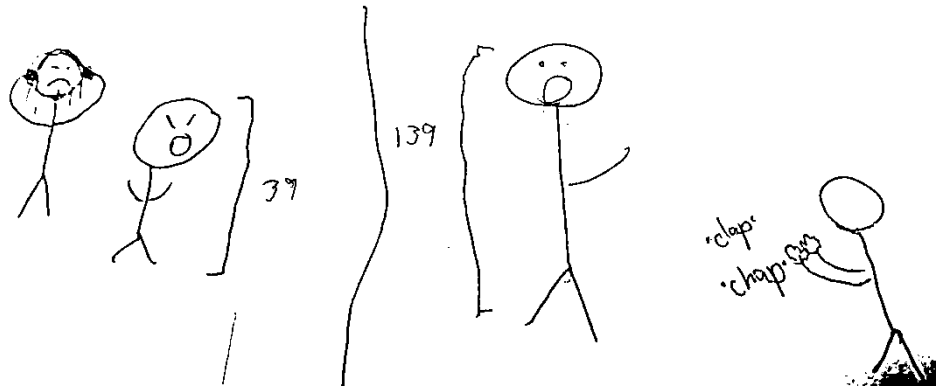
*Figure 5.20 Range and breath control*

Example 21: Figure 5.21 again deals with voice lowering, by drawing the soprano clef on the left and an attempt to the bass clef on the right. The quaver notes on the right are also more clearly defined, possible meaning that the participant is able to sing stronger than before. While he was unhappy on the left (I presume because he is squeaking), he enjoys singing now that his voice is more powerful.



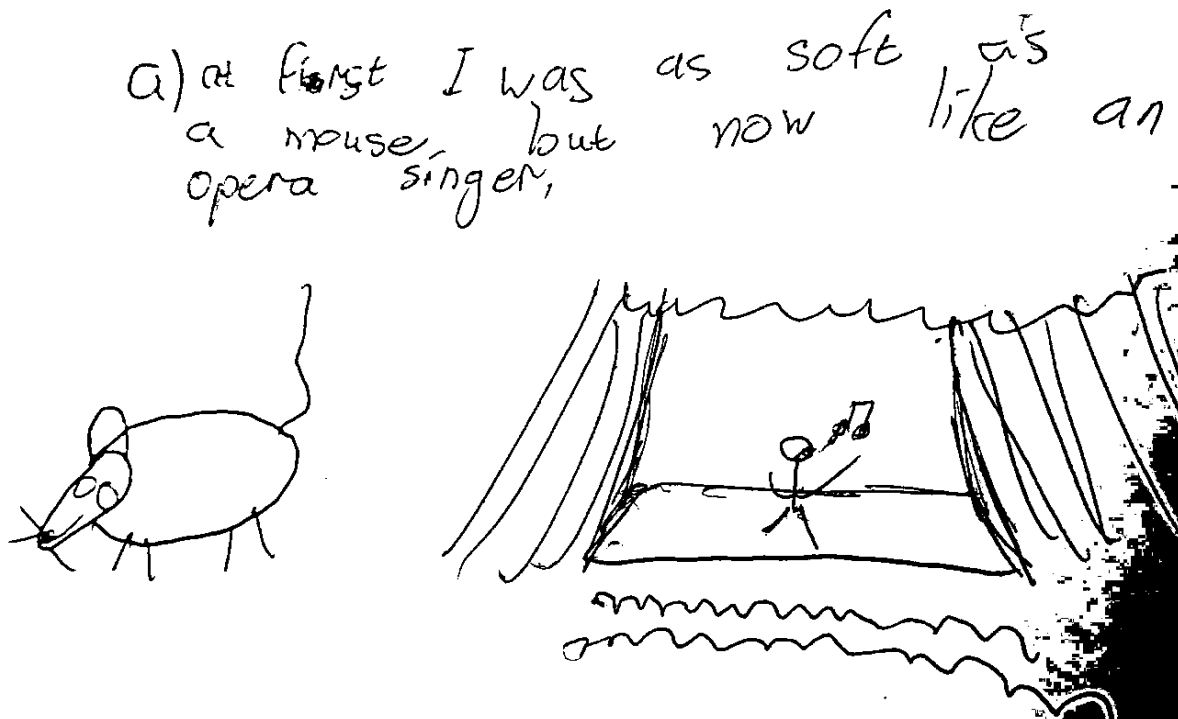
*Figure 5.21 "Squeek" (sic)*

Example 22: Some boys feel more self-assured with their new, changed voices; and they enjoy all the compliments and attention given to them. In figure 5.22, the boy sings to applause from the audience, whereas before he was used to people covering their ears when he sang.



**Figure 5.22 Applause**

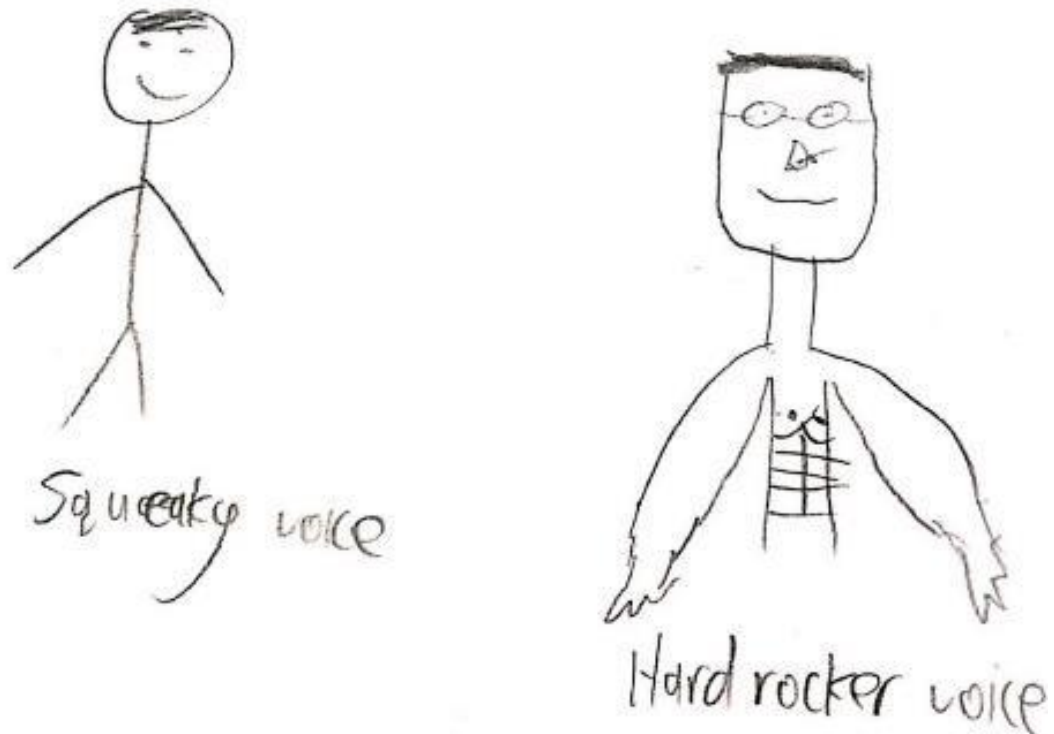
Example 23: Figure 5.23 reads “At first I was as soft as a mouse, but now like an opera singer”. This analogy speaks of gaining self-confidence, to a point where he is proud of his voice and does not mind sharing it on a large stage.



**Figure 5.23 Opera singer**

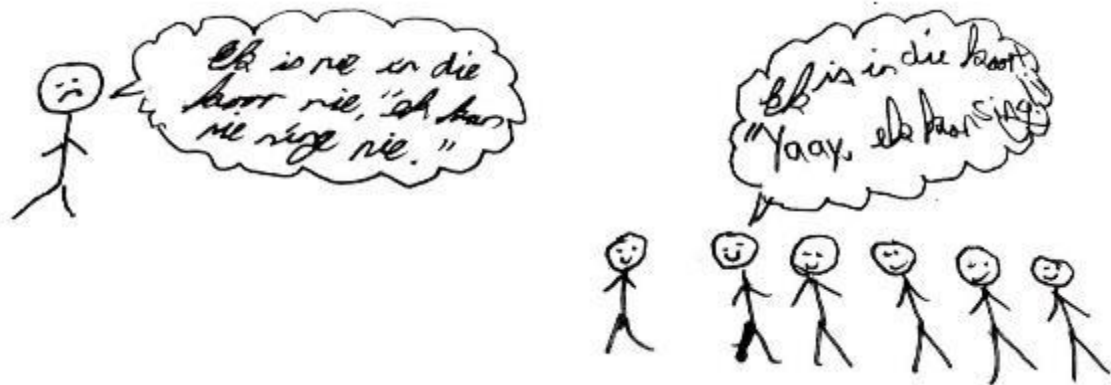


Example 24: The person in figure 5.24 went from having a “squeaky voice” to having a “hard rocker voice”. Note the change in the facial features – the figure on the right has a much more defined face, and is wearing glasses, making him seem older. He is also showing off his abdominal and pectoral muscles.



*Figure 5.24 Hard rocker voice*

Example 25: A new voice meant entry into the choir for the next participant (figure 5.25), which also makes him appear much happier now. The speech bubble on the left reads, “I am not in the choir, I cannot sing”. Note the unhappy face. However, with smiles from him and all his peers on the right-hand side, he says, “I am in the choir! Yaay, I can sing!” Being in the choir also meant being accepted in a group, as the figure on the left is standing alone, versus the crowd celebrating with him on the right.



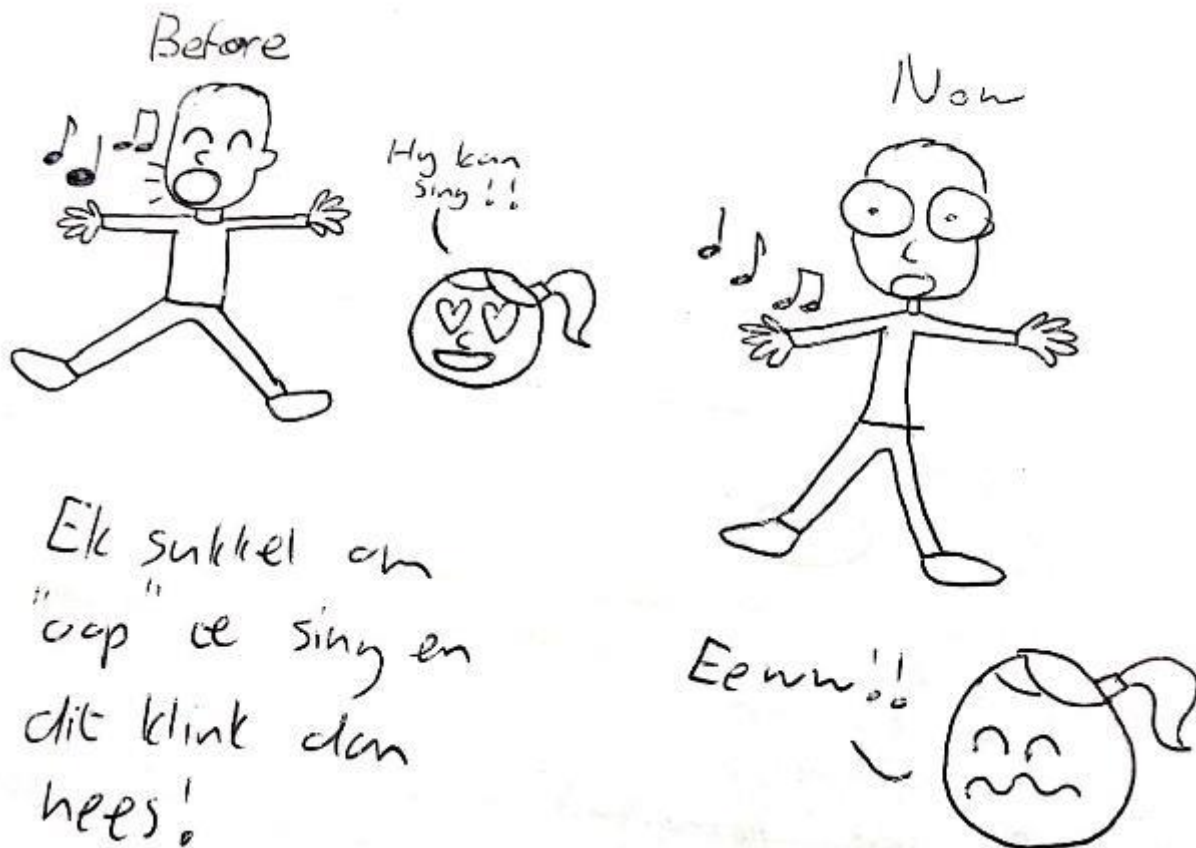
*Figure 5.25 Yaay, I can sing!*

Example 26: However, some boys experienced quite the opposite. Figure 5.26 illustrates someone reaching top achievements in eisteddfods in primary school, and now getting lower marks. Quite tragically, he described his feelings towards his changed voice as “sad, dark, no light”. This participant clearly has a passion for singing, also choosing choir over sport as an extra-mural activity. I suspect from the way that the questionnaire was answered that his voice is still busy changing. The breathier sound and difficulty in controlling the voice associated with voice change might explain the drop in marks.



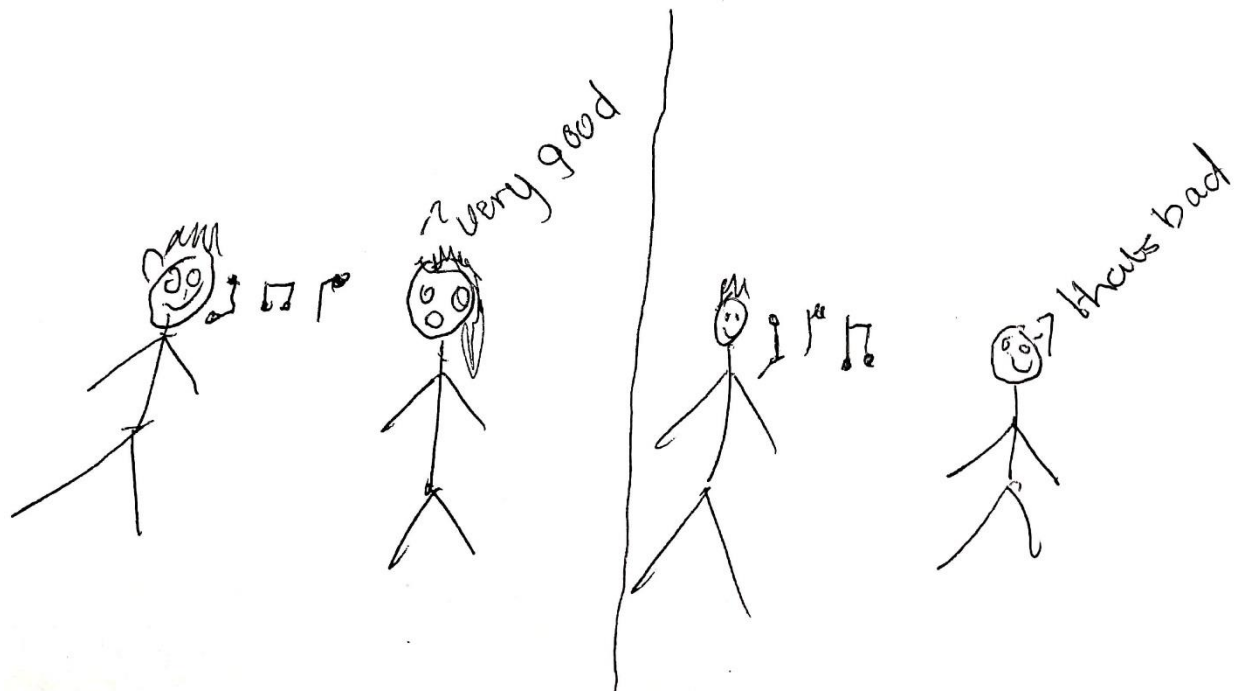
**Figure 5.26 Cum Laude**

Example 27: Figure 5.27, done by a choir singer from a mixed-gender school, shows a girl falling in love with his voice before voice change, but now she cannot stand the sound of it. The caption reads, “I’m struggling to sing ‘open’ and then it sounds hoarse.” The exaggerated eye size could suggest fear or uneasiness, especially in social situations, something that seems very important to him.



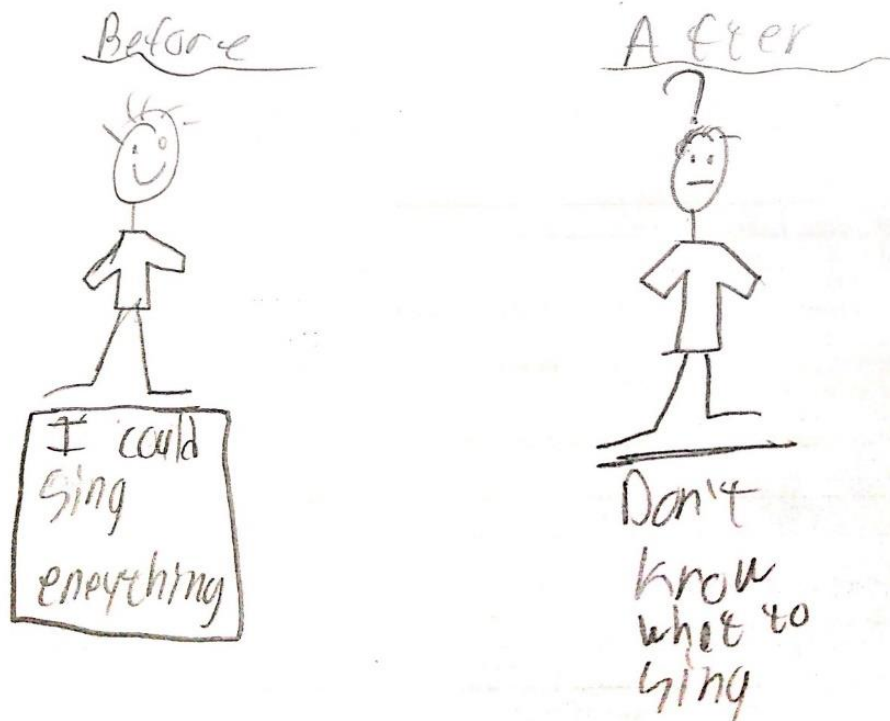
**Figure 5.27 Eeww!!**

Example 28: The next participant drew a woman on the left complimenting the singer's voice, while a man on the right now tells him, "that's bad". I suspect that the drawing is referring to his choir conductors at primary and high school, respectively. Note the size of the singer's head: it is smaller on the right, even though he is taller. This could point to a feeling of inferiority, or a lack of self-confidence. Looking at his questionnaire confirms this suspicion, as he uses very negative words to describe his voice. For instance, when asked to describe his feelings about his changed voice, he wrote, "I don't like it because I sound like a frog".



**Figure 5.28** *That's bad*

Example 29: The uncertainty of some singers is also shown in their drawings. Figure 5.29's text reads, "I could sing everything" on the left; and in the "after" column, "Don't know what to sing". In his questionnaire, he also admits liking his previous voice more than his current voice. It can therefore be assumed that he used to be a good singer, who is currently in the process of voice change. This would mean dealing with a very limited range, where he was used to having a large range and being able to sing anything that he wanted.



**Figure 5.29** *Don't know what to sing*

Example 30: Some boys who enjoyed singing out loud when they were younger do not have the confidence anymore, and prefer to listen to music. Figure 5.30 explains this scenario, where the figure on the left enjoyed singing at home (albeit in the shower), versus listening to music over headphones on the right. Interestingly, when this participant had to rate statements in the questionnaire, he gave 7 (out of a possible 10) for the statement “singing is a feminine activity”; and 10 for “it is embarrassing if girls hear you sing”. I suspect that he is very aware of masculinity and conforming to this identity; therefore, he will not do anything that he perceives as being feminine.



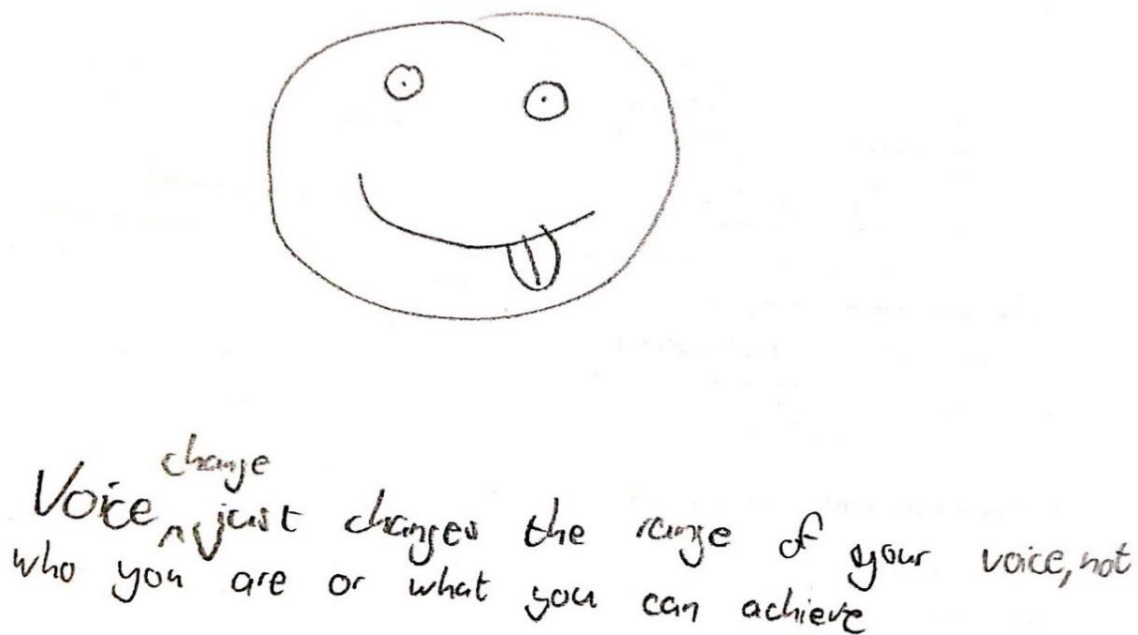
*Figure 5.30 No more shower songs*

#### **5.1.4 No perceived changes**

The last category consists of participants who do not feel like the process of voice change did much to change who they are. I selected a few drawings that expressed the same viewpoint, i.e. that only their voices changed, and that they actually feel quite the same as before the change. However, although I am careful not to over-analyse drawings (as discussed in the chapter on the research

methodology, chapter 2) I cannot help but wonder whether these participants really felt unchanged, or if there might be a deliberate decision to ignore the changes, and thus leaving their “child-comfort zone”. If we take into consideration that growth and change are the primary developmental tasks that adolescents face (see chapter 3), these drawings might even be indications of an identity crisis. On the other hand, these drawings could also be testimony to the fact that the participants did not all want to share their feelings with a stranger, as seen in the following example (example 31).

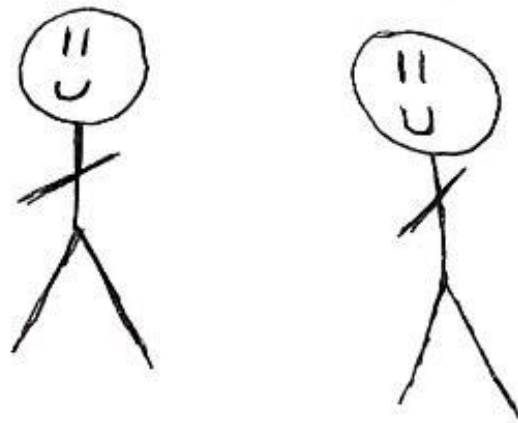
Example 31: This participant indicated the sentiment that he remained the same as he was before voice change in both the rounds of completed questionnaires. From his textual answers it is difficult to understand or to formulate an opinion for this perception, as his answers are very short. I assume that he did not feel comfortable enough to go into details about his feelings with someone that he did not trust.



*Figure 5.31 Just the range*



Example 32: This participant indicated that he would feel “the same” in both rounds of questionnaires. Interestingly, though, he filled out section A of the questionnaire (which is only to be completed when the voice has changed/is busy changing) during the first round of research, but not the second time. Could the first round indicate a form of peer pressure and that he wanted to give the impression that his voice is changing, in case someone saw his questionnaire? If this is the case, I suspect that the drawing shows more of his “hoped-for” future-self, and is not necessarily based on reality. He writes that singing is his passion, and the conclusion could be made that he enjoys his appearance and voice as it is, and does not want anything to change.



Exactly the same, because it only changes your voice, not your personality and happiness.

*Figure 5.32 Exactly the same*

Example 33: This participant had a very strong and rational opinion about certain concepts of the questionnaire. His caption states that voice change is a “natural occurrence (sic)”, and he wrote in section A of the questionnaire that, although his voice change started suddenly, he had “proper guidance” through the process. Furthermore, he confirms enjoying his current, changed voice more, and that he has a better self-esteem. He also wrote in the margin below question 17, “Masculinity (sic) is an abstract concept (unnecessary) and therefore can’t and shouldn’t be measured whatsoever”. At first glance, it does really seem as if he feels unchanged by the whole process.

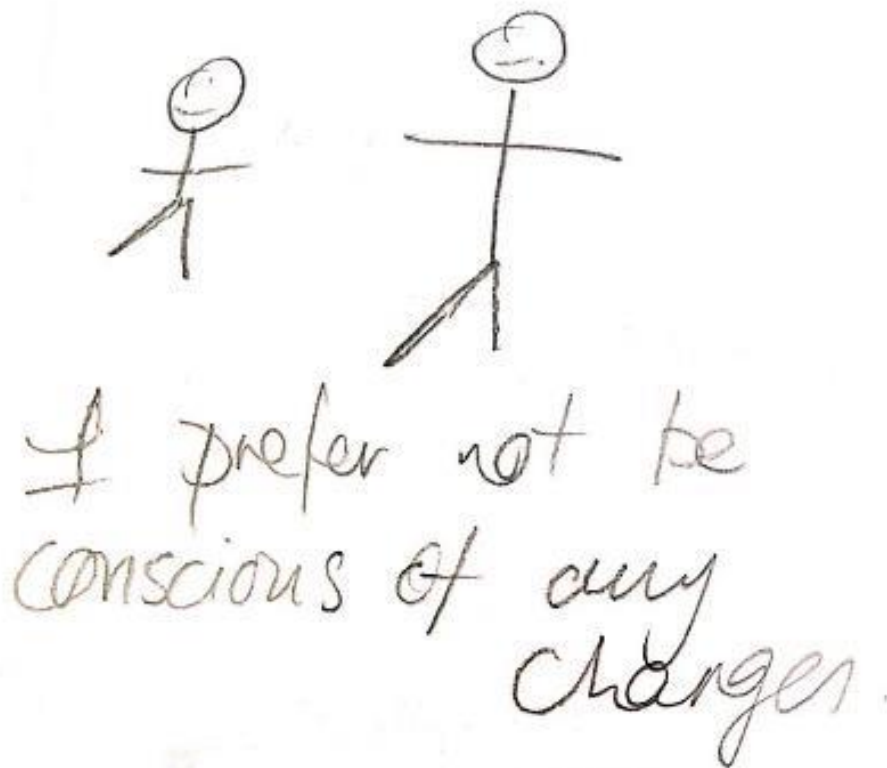
However, in the second questionnaire he changes his answers. He now is “unsure” which voice (current or previous) he likes best, and elaborates on his choice by writing, “To fit a stereotype, to not be dehumanized for not fitting into the manly agenda”. His feelings towards his changed voice are also an eye-opener. He writes, “No opinion, does not really concern me, but I have been conditioned to feel better about my deeper voice”. His second drawing is a very faint scribble and could not be used for this thesis. However, it shows very good artsmanship. The picture is an outline of the Michelangelo fresco “The creation of Adam” and he explains the drawing by writing, “The difference is that after my voice deepened/‘broke’, I was enlightened and was suddenly channeling (sic) the energy of Adam, the first male.” The proficiency of this drawing made me question the stickmen used for figure 5.33 (below), as it seems that he was unwilling to draw, or to think deeply enough to draw something of substance.

The mention of being “conditioned” into feeling good about his changed voice was very interesting to read. This same conditioning could also account for the first drawing, i.e. that the process of voice change “should not” have any effect on a boy’s life outside of his singing. I will elaborate more on this finding in chapter 6.



**Figure 5.33 A natural occurrence**

Example 34: The chorister who drew figure 5.34 wrote, “I prefer not [to] be conscious of any changes”. It must be noted that his voice had not started to change yet. Interestingly enough, this drawing was made during the second round of research. The first time, he drew two figures next to each other, with the one on the right clearly taller. His caption read, “Taller, bigger etc. the whole Life Orientation textbook story”. Therefore, what I understand is that he used the “conditioned” (textbook) explanation in his first drawing; however, in figure 5.34 he breaks away from that structure and chooses to not focus on changes that might or might not be occurring. This denial of what would be happening could be very unhealthy for his self-esteem and self-perception. I can only hope that he did get proper guidance when the changes did start to occur.



***Figure 5.34 Not conscious of changes***

## 5.2 Conclusion

While evaluating and grouping the data captured from the different drawings, it was interesting to note that certain patterns presented themselves repeatedly in the content of the images. After careful consideration, I could therefore divide the drawings into the four categories discussed above; namely, physical changes; (5.1.2) psychological changes, (5.1.3) vocal changes, and (5.1.4) no perceived changes. It became quite clear that the participants felt strongly about one specific element. As the contents of the drawings were not specified beyond asking for a self-drawing before and after voice change, this observation of the perceived categories is very valuable as a means of understanding the different elements that boys associate with voice change.

For further study, I would recommend one-on-one interviews before assigning the drawing, as that would give the researcher some perspective of the circumstances the participants may be facing. However, this question gave me valuable discernment into the feelings behind voice change – a discernment that I hope will be valuable for music teachers and choral conductors throughout the whole of South Africa. The subconscious messages and insights connected with the drawings will be discussed further in the next chapter (chapter 6), as I believe this to be one of the most significant findings in this research.

## CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

When I began investigating the reasons behind boys' non-participation in high school choir activities, which served as the starting point to my research, I thought that my findings would primarily be sport related (the typical “men don't sing; they play rugby” approach). What I did find, however, is that we have a very complex problem on our hands, and that if we (as music teachers and choir conductors) wish to continue to provide opportunities for boys to be able to participate in musical activities (specifically choir singing), we need to be educated in the different aspects of this phenomenon. Some of the reasons found in my primary research confirms world-wide trends as stated in the literature review (chapter 2). These will be discussed and evaluated below, under heading 6.1. Thereafter, I focus on the results that can specifically be associated with my research questions and sub-questions, as mentioned in previous chapters (see heading 6.2 and 6.3, respectively). Some of these results include new findings that have not been included in the thesis yet. Furthermore, I want to pen down some recommendations for practical application (6.4), as well as ideas for further studies that I think would be valuable in this regard (6.5). Finally, I wish to add other contributions that this thesis has made in the academic field (6.6).

### 6.1 Reasons for boys' lack of participation in singing activities

The first reason behind this phenomenon discussed in the literature review, was, indeed, boys' busy schedules and focus on sport. After observing and analysing the data carefully, two facts presented themselves. Firstly, it seems that, contrary to the international findings presented in the literature review, South African boys will embrace the opportunity to sing, provided that the school's culture and after-curricular schedule permits it. Almost 60% of the participants indicated that they would want to do both sport and choir if they could. In practice, this means that if you have a school with 1000 boys, you should have 600 boys coming for choir auditions. If this is not the case, as I believe it to be in the majority of South African schools, the current *modus operandi* needs to change. My suggestions in this regard will be discussed later in this chapter.

Secondly, the findings observed in the questionnaire conclude that there seems to be a greater tolerance of, and respect for, male choir singers in South Africa than in the other countries mentioned in the literature review. This observation is evident from the ratings given to the

statement “boys who plays sports (e.g. rugby/hockey/cricket) are more masculine (manly) than boys who sing in the choir”. The overall average answer was a mere 3.7 (out of a possible 10), with between 74 – 79% answers within one standard deviation of this mean. Even the non-singers scored the statement relatively low at 4.5. I expected these numbers to be much higher, if they were to match the views of participants quoted in the literature review. Granted, the schools where my research was conducted all have strong choir cultures, which may have influenced even the non-singers’ views of male choristers. However, it is still heart-warming to know that the serious stigma surrounding teenage boys singing seems to be less of a threat here than in other countries.

The second reason discussed in the review was the need for male role models, exposing boys to music in early childhood. Although this subject was not directly addressed in the questionnaire, question 1 – 3 (referring to guidance during the process of voice change) did give me a good impression of the presence and need of role models in the boys’ lives. Contrary to the words of Patrick Freer stated in chapter 2 (that almost all boys participating in singing lessons can identify specific role models who had a positive influence on their singing), more than 20% of the choir singers that completed the questionnaires did not receive any guidance. However, when asked if they would have liked someone to talk to, twenty-seven of the thirty-three boys that answered “yes” in the second round of research were choir singers. I can therefore conclude that while guidance or modelling is not a prerequisite for influencing boys to participate in music (as Freer suggests), it is very important for parents and other role models to encourage, guide and motivate these boys when they do participate in choir singing. In this regard, the concept of vocal parenting seems crucial, and will be discussed further under the heading of practical applications. The need for male choral conductors also reaches further than only the psychological benefits thereof. Not only will a male conductor be an important role model for the boys, but he will understand the male voice so much better, especially the struggles associated with the changing voice. Men are also more equipped to help with demonstrations, as they sing in the right octave, so as not to confuse boys how high or low they should sing.

The third factor identified as a reason for the lack of boys’ participation, was the perceived feminine nature of singing. As with the issue of focus on sport, the outcome of my research shows that this factor is not as prominent in South Africa as in other countries studied previously. The overall average rating to the statement “singing is a feminine activity (something more for girls

than boys)” was just over two out of ten, with 80% of the participants answering within one standard deviation of this average. Even the non-singers’ average is relatively low at 4 out of 10. I realize that different masculinities will perceive certain activities differently, and therefore it will be near to impossible to influence every boy into believing that singing is not just feminine in nature. However, by implementing a few general culture changes at schools (discussed later), I believe that these ratings can drop even lower.

The next factor discussed in the literature review was the issue of inefficient teaching. The main point highlighted in the review was that teachers do not have enough knowledge to effectively guide adolescent boys through the process of voice change, with all the emotional conflict that comes with it. However, while analysing the primary data, I realised something that may prove to be the main focus for my research going forward. My hypothesis was that *high school teachers* did not know how to manage voice change. But, when reading all the respondents’ descriptions of their conductors, it became clear that all the choristers spoke very highly of their current choir teachers. The problem area, in this regard, was in fact that *primary school conductors* were dropping boys from the choir when their voices started changing. Without the proper support structure, these boys understood that while they used to be good enough, their voice change meant that they can no longer sing well enough to participate in choir. And with this experience, these boys will not step forward for high school choir auditions, and risk going through that embarrassing situation ever again.

I cannot suggest one specific solution for this problem, as every boy experiences voice change differently. A few options are included later in this chapter for evaluation and application in different scenarios. However, the crucial point is that primary school teachers need to be better educated about the physical and psychological changes that adolescence and specifically voice change brings about. It may only be necessary to guide one student for the last three months of his grade 7 year – but the proper knowledge and compassion will make all the difference in the world of keeping that one boy in a choral programme. This topic must therefore be treated with the necessary gravity in student syllabuses, for both music students and educational students alike. It is important to know that not all choir conductors have music degrees, therefore this topic should be covered widely, from tertiary educational classes to choral conducting masterclasses. Again, some suggestions in this regard have been given under the heading of practical application.



Finally, the role of the school management as last factor was not addressed directly in the questionnaire. I have to mention that all the headmasters I approached were very encouraging and accommodating towards my research, which gave me the impression that they are serious about boys' participation in their respective schools' choirs. However, from the questionnaires I deduced that clashes occur between sports practices and choir rehearsals in every school - even in these schools that claim to have strong choir cultures. I believe that the headmasters, as policy makers in schools should play an active role in establishing a culture that promotes participation in all the aspects of school life (academics, sport and culture). This point will also be discussed later.

Upon completing the research of the different factors discussed above for the literature review, I concluded that there are two factors which require deeper research (and which ultimately became my research questions). Firstly, I wanted to understand the self-image of boys going through voice change; and consequently, find out what the choir teacher's role is in guiding the boys through this process. After spending a considerable amount of time analysing the results of my research, it became clear that these two questions cannot be answered separately, as the teacher (and specifically music teacher) plays a significant role in helping boys form a positive self-image while going through voice change. Entering into adolescence is, indeed, a time when teenagers are very sensitive towards the opinions that others have of them (Meyer, 2004:163) and during the journey towards self-efficiency (the conviction that difficult situations can be handled), learning through observation and modelling has been proved to provide positive results (Edwards, 1998:544).

## **6.2 Discussion of the research questions**

The two main schools of thought surrounding the developmental phase of adolescence as discussed in my literature review, are the *sturm und drang* (storm and urge) versus the so-called *positive youth development* phase. After a careful and in-depth study of all the questionnaires, I have to conclude that, while certain aspects associated with the *sturm und drang* theory certainly cannot be denied, the positive youth development is the theory that I generally found presented itself amongst the majority of the respondents. The core of this approach is that positive experiences will be repeated, especially if those experiences relate to the adolescent's ideal possible self. I found the predominance of the answers in the questionnaires to be hopeful and confident, showing

signs of growing into mature thought processes. The drawings of section C corroborate these opinions, with more than 76% of the respondents drawing themselves in a positive light after voice change. I suspect that these respondents possess a strong internal locus of control (Edwards, 1998:545), described as the belief that they can influence or control the outcomes of their own actions (Wang, Tomlinson & Noe, 2010:360).

On the other hand, some of the drawings included in chapter 5 have clearly shown that there still are shyness and uncomfortability surrounding adolescence. I believe that we should start to analyse the cause of the problem, instead of merely labelling these thoughts as *sturm und drang*-related symptoms. Why are there boys that marvel at growing up and celebrating the fact that they are “becoming men”, while others try to hide their uncertainty? I propose that this last group of boys does not have the support structure and the positive encouragement that the others have. I realise that it is bold to make such a general statement and I am sure that there will be many exceptions to this proposal. In fact, I have to state that almost two thirds of the group with a positive outlook also indicated no guidance received through voice change. However, although statistics in the textual part of the questionnaire suggest that guidance is not a prerequisite for feeling positive towards voice change, one fact stood out above all else when reviewing the self-drawings of the participants: in 70% of the drawings where a negative self was portrayed, no guidance was received through the process of adolescence.

The way forward, then, to ensure that boys will be staying in high school choir programmes, is, in my opinion, by focussing on the trust relationship between music teachers, choral conductors and adolescent boys. Furthermore, to contribute positively to their commitment to the choir we need to establish teachers and conductors as vocal parents to engage with boys and support them holistically through a very turbulent time in their lives. This requires, amongst others, the availability of choral conductors for more than just the physical rehearsals, as well as teachers with a deep founded knowledge about the physiology, psychology and emotional needs surrounding the changing voice, and adolescence in general. It is inevitable that some choristers will always experience the voice change as negative, as proven in my research. I believe, though, that if these boys have someone trustworthy to talk to, they will remain loyal to this relationship and continue singing in the choir, because it will form part of their “safe haven”. Some practical suggestions to implement these measures are discussed below.

### 6.3 Secondary questions emerging from the research

Finally, some secondary questions that emerged from my study, as discussed in the chapter on methodology, were whether (i) adolescent singers go through voice change easier or harder than non-singers, (ii) the school setup (all boys versus mixed gender) play a part in the self-concept of boys' going through voice change, and (iii) there were any differences in the way that different geographical areas perceive voice change? The first question was answered clearly in the questionnaire, with choir singers being the only respondents who indicated voice change as a "negative" or "very negative" experience. Although these answers make up only between 5 – 9% of the total ratings received, it is evident that there are some singers that experience the voice change as troublesome – versus 0% negative ratings received from non-singers.

The comparison of the different school setups was more difficult to answer. My hypothesis was that the all-boys' schools have an advantage in that boys can be more comfortable, knowing that everyone around them is going through the same changes. This initially proved to be partially true, although not by a very large margin. The combined percentage of "positive" and "very positive" experiences indicated in the second round of research was calculated as 59% for boys in all-boys' schools, versus 47% for boys in mixed-gender schools. However, the negative responses disproved the hypothesis, when 8% of all-boys' school boys experienced voice change as either "negative" or "very negative", compared to only 2% in mixed-gender schools. The conclusion here is therefore that the school setup does not make a substantial difference in boys' experiences towards voice change.

Lastly, I am hesitant to form conclusions about the various experiences of schools in different geographical areas, as I only consulted with four schools, situated in three provinces. The difference in answers could therefore merely be a reflection on the specific school, rather than the whole province's collective boys' experiences surrounding voice change. The percentages I will share below are therefore done only for interest's sake and cannot be used for statistical value. The research showed that the selected school in the Free State produced boys with a much higher positive experience rating surrounding voice change (68% versus 37% and 28%, respectively). This school also recorded a lower negative response rate (3% versus 7%). Note that one other

school did not indicate a single negative experience, but because of the much smaller target group present at this school, the result will not be considered in this equation.

With my research questions answered (to the extent of this thesis), I would like to prove the validity of the thesis by adding some recommendations for practical application. As “research is mainly relevant if findings have the potential to improve the human condition” (Enslin, 2014:278), I believe that these recommendations might pave the way for addressing this important issue in the future.

#### **6.4 Recommendations for practical application**

As a music teacher with more than a decade’s experience working with boys’ changing voices, I would like to offer some suggestions for teachers that could be helpful in the field. However, before any of these options can be investigated, the style of teaching in South African schools will need to be addressed. As mentioned in the literature review, the two mainstream approaches to teaching seem to be that of the authoritarian teacher versus alliance builders. To enter into a discussion with adolescents about subjects that can have a very emotional impact on them, while taking on an authoritarian approach, will have very little effect, as children will most likely not open up to someone who (to quote Skager, 2009, again) “infantilises” these young people. Therefore, the first and foremost recommendation, to change the future of boys’ musical experiences, is to ensure that a balanced approach to teaching styles is taught to all current and future educators. This can be done by adding an alliance-style teaching module, as suggested by Eliot (2009), to all educational tertiary courses, in both undergraduate and post-graduate degrees as well as any certificate and diploma courses offered. Furthermore, this module also would need to be taught to all B.Mus (music) students during their training. I cannot emphasise this enough – without the proper relationship-building techniques to connect with boys during adolescence, all other attempts at rectifying the situation cannot (in my opinion) be optimally implemented. This statement is one of the most important co-findings that I discovered while analysing the primary data and will definitely influence both my own teaching style, as well as any further research and studies I conduct.

Secondly, I suggest that all role players should be well-educated and informed about how they can support and help to guide teenage boys through voice change. This requires firstly that the choir

teacher is educated and knowledgeable about the type of guidance needed, and, secondly, that a platform is created for said teacher to communicate with parents and other influencers in the singers' lives. I would suggest implementing regular information sessions, either in written form or actual meetings, to make the different role players aware of strategies to best encourage and motivate the boys to keep participating in choir. These contact sessions could have many additional benefits as well, such as getting the parents to understand the vision for the choir (and therefore to support the importance of all rehearsals), starting funding groups for tours, and establishing a general support structure of all the boys involved. With the teacher taking the role of the vocal parent, and therefore caring about the holistic development and well-being of his choir members, this support structure has the ability to strengthen the relationship between all the parties involved. If the boy then realises that there are many role players supporting his choir singing, he should be motivated to continue singing for as long as possible.

Naturally, if the boys themselves have access to more information regarding their changing body, they might also be more open to accepting and embracing these changes, rather than being conditioned into thinking that voice change should not have an effect on their lives. I therefore propose the reconsideration of the feeble one-liner in Life Orientation books to include a whole chapter on "getting to know your changing body". If necessary, the classes of mixed-gender schools can be split to spend a period or two discussing the specific gender's physical and emotional changes going through adolescence; and their feelings surrounding these changes. It will not do any harm to the boys claiming they do not need any guidance, while making a world of difference to those in need of support. I also suggest adding a chapter on changing voices in the Music stream of the subject Creative Arts. Seeing as girls' voices also change, this chapter will be beneficial to both genders. I am aware that Music is an elective subject in the senior phase (grade 7 – 9) and therefore not everyone will have access to this information, but hopefully most of the choir singers (at least) will participate in this course, as my research showed that they are the ones most in need of guidance. This chapter can be combined with learning the different voice groups in a choir and/or different genres of vocal music.

For choir conductors, dealing with choir singers going through voice change can be a difficult topic, as no two singers experience the situation in the same way. However, one possible idea for the teacher to consider would be to either keep the boy singing an octave lower and therefor add a

new voice group to their choir (something similar to McKenzie's alto-tenor plan or Cooper's Cambiata approach). If there are enough seniors going through voice change, one can even consider starting a cambiata choir (Bullard, 2016). Alternatively, if there are other primary schools close by, why not establish a joint choir for boys going through voice change? This arrangement would ensure that specific repertoire can be used with appropriate vocal ranges so as not to put any strain on the changing voices. A special cambiata choir can also help to motivate boys by not excluding them from choir singing, but rather "promoting" them to the "almost-grown up choir". Having rehearsals with other boys going through the same experience can also help to create positive experiences for those struggling with vocal cracks or loss of range.

A second option would be for the primary school teacher to collaborate with a local high school choral conductor. As soon as the boy's voice starts changing, he can be transferred to the high school choir, and placed in a voice group more suited to his range (for instance, second tenor in a young male choir). The advantage here is that the boy will already be experiencing the joy of making music in high school while finishing his primary school career, which will result in his feeling like a part of something important. By the time that he reaches high school, he can remain part of the choir family, and this will hopefully mean that his commitment to the choir will have been firmly established.

Finally, in addressing culture changes that need to happen in schools, I strongly suggest that the sport organiser and culture organiser of every school should make more efforts in coordinating extramural activities in such a way that students will not need to choose between sport and culture. Choir practices need to be scheduled into a dedicated culture slot that does not interfere with any sport activities, extra classes or hostel study time. The best time would be anywhere between straight after school until about 19:00, as concentration will decline in the evenings (Chaudhury, Wang & Colwell, 2005:225), making for less effective rehearsals. A schedule with a dedicated culture slot might also free up some key sportsmen to join the choir, and thereby immediately breaking the stigma that only "soft" boys sing in the choir.

Moreover, taking the time to learn one or two popular songs and perform them in front of the school could also work to uplift the image of the choir. As stated in the literature review, not all types of music are perceived as feminine. If a school choir can prove that they sing songs that the rest of the school likes, it can go a long way towards changing the status of male choir singers.

This “marketing” of the choir could benefit the opinion of non-singers towards the choir, to lessen the possibility of success ratings dropping towards the middle of the year, as seen in my primary research. My suggestion would be to host a cultural assembly once every month, or even only once every term, where the choir gets a chance to perform these popular songs. As the function of this assembly will primarily be to establish and promote a respect for culture and the male singers in the school (and not about a cultural education), I would suggest reserving the artistic show pieces for concerts and competitions where the audience is educated enough to appreciate those genres. The organiser or conductor should also ensure that the placement of the choir item(s) to be performed in the order of the assembly is optimal. It should, for instance, not be right at the end of the gathering, when everyone is ready to adjourn. As every school’s assembly is unique, the teacher is bound to best know what placement and repertoire choices would have the best results.

To be able to establish a strong choir culture in a school, the teacher will ultimately have to gain the support of the headmaster and senior management team. They should be the policy makers in terms of strategies such as a global extra-mural calendar (discussed earlier). Headmasters should also be encouraged to attend as many cultural events as possible, and to promote attendance under the learners, teachers and parents alike. If he/she can be involved in these events in any way, even better. In this way, the importance of the choir (and the singers involved) is highlighted for all to see.

These suggestions given above are aimed at helping conductors to establish a strong choir culture in their schools, in order to ultimately retain as many adolescent boys as possible in their respective choir programmes. However, the finalisation of the analysis of data (chapters 4 and 5) as well as the conclusions and suggestions made above, also revealed additional aspects of this subject that requires further study. These aspects will be discussed below (6.5).

## 6.5 Recommendations for further studies

Due to the importance of this subject and the current lack of sufficient South African research done on this phenomenon, I would love to be able to pursue this matter further in the future. I have identified three specific facets that I strongly feel deserve more attention. These facets are (i) the importance of personal interviews, (ii) comparing the existing data with that of schools from lower quintiles and schools without a current choir culture, and (iii) the significance of the primary school teacher.

Firstly, upon reaching the conclusion of the trust relationship that needs to be established between the singers and conductor for proper guidance to be given, I began to understand that this also meant that the respondents of my research would probably not open up to people they do not know and trust. This fact could account for the discrepancies between the drawings and the written responses – where the written accounts are carefully worded and shielded, versus non-verbal accounts slipping more hints about the participants’ true feelings. Examples of this can be seen in (for example) figures 5.1, 5.2, and 5.5 in the chapter on drawings. It could also mean that I received “conditioned” responses (refer to the explanation before figure 5.33). I believe that this proves the viewpoint given by the art therapists, that one-on-one sessions are of the utmost importance if one wishes to discover the true meaning behind a participant’s drawing. Going forward, I will definitely conduct personal interviews, on the premise of first getting to know the participants and building a relationship of trust.

I would also like the opportunity to compare the reasons for boys’ lack of participation in choral activities with those of schools in lower quintiles (the so-called “no fees schools”) (Goldstone, 2016:iii) to be able to fully understand the South African context. My hypothesis here is that other factors, such as transport to and from rehearsals, as well as funding for tours and choral attire may come into play – factors that have not emerged at all during this study. Furthermore, to gain a holistic understanding, I will have to compare results of schools where the choir culture is not as strong as in the schools chosen for this study; as well as schools that have different ethnic demographics. In this study, the different views between singers and non-singers were already evident, seen for example in how they answered question 17.1. On average, the non-singers scored the statement that singing is a feminine activity as 4 (out of a possible 10), versus a 1.6 rating from



the choir members. Furthermore, a study based in the United States of America posited that white adolescents go through a much more extensive identity crisis than their black peers, in which identity foreclosure (to blindly accept the identity of authority figures) is more common (Waterman 1982:346). It will be very interesting to note if the same phenomenon still presents itself today, and in the South African schools' setup.

Thirdly, I am hoping to explore the finding that primary school teachers need to be better equipped to deal with voice change; especially due to emerging studies showing that music in primary school is taught by more and more "general" (i.e. non-music specialist) teachers (De Vries, 2015). My research showed that much of the negativity towards singing in high school and voice changing originated in primary school teachers denying boys access to the choir once their voices started changing. As they would probably never see these boys again, they are, in all likelihood, not even aware of the damage that they are causing. As mentioned earlier, there are other solutions to this problem which need to be communicated to these teachers.

I believe that these areas of research will add to the heuristic value of the topic (Enslin, 2014:280) and therefore further increase the validity of the study. As stated before, this thesis addresses an important area of research that has, as of yet, been lacking in the South African context. Furthermore, and in addition to the findings discussed in this chapter, I hope that this thesis has contributed to the academic field on the subject of using drawings as an integral part of the research process. This topic, which was discussed extensively in chapter 5, will be evaluated below (6.6).

## **6.6 Other contributions to the academic field**

As stated above, this thesis has proven the value of including respondent-generated imagery in the form of drawings to qualitative research, especially in combination with questionnaires. As the drawings revealed crucial non-verbal commentary, this method of data gathering allowed me a deeper level of understanding of different emotions experienced when dealing with voice change. It was also very interesting to note that the majority of the respondents chose to concentrate on a single aspect of voice change when presenting the drawing. Consequently, the arrangement of the drawings could occur very naturally by grouping them into the categories (i) physical changes, (ii) psychological changes, (iii) vocal changes, and (iv) no perceived changes. As mentioned before,

these categories are valuable in understanding the main elements that boys focus on in having to describe voice change.

The participants choosing to illustrate physical changes mainly drew figures with muscles, acne, and facial and bodily hair, whereas the drawings of the second group of participants focussed either on their pride at becoming men, or their growing into more serious adults. Concepts of self-esteem and self-confidence were also mentioned under the second heading. Thirdly, mainly choir singers identified with the grouping of vocal changes. Here, a duality can once more be witnessed between those participants who illustrated pride with their new, deeper voices, better breath control or larger ranges; and those who are struggling with the loss of their old voices. Finally, a group of participants chose not to be conscious of any changes. I commented that it was interesting that their drawings and captions often contradicted each other and offered the hypothesis that these answers were conditioned responses given due to not trusting strangers with very personal information.

Although I concluded that this method of data capturing should, in future, be amended to include one-on-one interviews in order to build a trust-relationship with the respondents, I hope that other scholars will be able to benefit from this practice. The finding that mere written answers could prove standardised or conditioned in nature, whereas the core of drawings proved to be much more personal and deep-found, is integral to this thesis and could be of great value to other researchers in this field.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

The issue of boys' lack of participation in high-school musical activities is a phenomenon that has been researched extensively over the last few decades. However, rather than merely restating existing sources, my aim was to provide a uniquely South African approach, as very little local research is available in this regard. In doing so, I found it encouraging to discover that South African adolescent boys seem to be more receptive to the idea of male choristers, or even of singing themselves, if the opportunity arose. However, as stated previously, these boys are in dire need of guidance by properly educated teachers. The majority of these boys will benefit from a balanced approach to education, combining alliance-based teaching with other styles of instilling discipline. This can, however, only happen if they believe that they are in a relationship of trust with a teacher

who understands the value of becoming a vocal parent. It is only in establishing this relationship that all adolescent boys may truly experience a positive self-perception when going through the process of voice change. Consequently, a positive self-perception should lead to a rapid increase in boys wanting to sing and stay singing because they are able to feel proud of this talent, and not ashamed that it might influence their portrayed masculinity negatively.

Too often conductors only sweep in and out of rehearsals or concerts without making that connection with the boys. In the race to prepare choirs for competitions, teachers often forget their greater responsibility towards creating a love for music. Freer (2007:32) is of the opinion that it is the boys that suffer the most, by saying that “[a] boy faced with choral repertoire he doesn’t like, a changing voice he doesn’t understand, and instruction he finds boring will become a boy who proclaims he hates school music and disengages from choral music. Forever.”

Working with boys’ voices daily, I am very passionate about the importance of this subject. As we are entrusted with forming young adults who are ready to face the world after school, we need to ensure that we do the best we can – with all the knowledge that we can possibly gather. Although this study may have started as a result of a simple academical curiosity, I now believe that it encompasses much more than merely building a choir or getting boys to join a musical performance. The knowledge that I gained from this research has led me to believe that we carry a great responsibility in helping these young people – not only in understanding their changing bodies, but also to help them form positive identities that will guide them throughout the entirety of their lives.

If we can achieve a school culture where choir (or music in general) and sport could become completely integrated, we can finally be in a position to aim for artistic citizenship (Elliot, 2012) amongst all high school boys. Therefore, in applying the recommendations mentioned above (heading 6.4), we are no longer merely campaigning for a more successful choir, but rather striving to create better leaders, scholars, husbands and fathers of the future. To quote Elliot (2012) once more:

“There is absolutely no doubt that individual and group music-making and listening comfort, sustain and inspire people and transform individual lives. But in larger terms, I am moved to suggest that many school and community music programs are capable

of much more. Again, we cannot forfeit what we do so well. I fell in love with music and music education through my school and community music-making programs and experiences, and through my interactions with thoughtful, democratic and inspiring teachers. I've spent my academic career trying to improve and protect such programs, and I will continue to do so. But what I see in the world prompts me to question music programs that fail to include ways of empowering students to practice lifelong music-making for *both* musical and social transformation" (Elliot, 2012:26).

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## ADDENDUM A: Ethical clearance



### NOTICE OF APPROVAL

#### REC Humanities New Application Form

22 October 2018

Project number: 7670

Project Title: Shaping identity and educating male choristers: exploring the music teacher's influence on male singers' self-perception during the voice change

Dear Mrs Marissa Von Mollendorf

Your REC Humanities New Application Form submitted on 15 October 2018 was reviewed and approved by the REC: Humanities.

Please note the following for your approved submission:

#### Ethics approval period:

Protocol approval date (Humanities)	Protocol expiration date (Humanities)
22 October 2018	21 October 2019

#### GENERAL COMMENTS:

Please take note of the General Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

**If the researcher deviates in any way from the proposal approved by the REC: Humanities, the researcher must notify the REC of these changes.**

Please use your SU project number (7670) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your project.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

#### FOR CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS AFTER REC APPROVAL PERIOD

Please note that a progress report should be submitted to the Research Ethics Committee: Humanities before the approval period has expired if a continuation of ethics approval is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary)

#### Included Documents:

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Informed Consent Form	consent form minor	07/08/2018	1
Proof of permission	Permission Diamantveld	07/08/2018	1
Proof of permission	Permission Grey College	07/08/2018	1
Proof of permission	Permission Hoerskool Stellenbosch	07/08/2018	1
Proof of permission	Permission Paarl Boys High	07/08/2018	1
Parental consent form	consent form parents	10/09/2018	3
Assent form	consent form minor	10/09/2018	3
Default	MvMollendorf 14379937 REC	15/10/2018	1
Research Protocol/Proposal	MvMollendorf Research proposal 20180131	15/10/2018	3
Data collection tool	MvMollendorf Questionnaire final	15/10/2018	2
Proof of permission	Research approval letter NCED	15/10/2018	1

Proof of permission

Research approval letter WCED

15/10/2018 1

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at [cgraham@sun.ac.za](mailto:cgraham@sun.ac.za).

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator: Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

*National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) registration number: REC-050411-032.*

*The Research Ethics Committee: Humanities complies with the SA National Health Act No.61 2003 as it pertains to health research. In addition, this committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research established by the Declaration of Helsinki (2013) and the Department of Health Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.) 2015. Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.*

## Investigator Responsibilities

### Protection of Human Research Participants

Some of the general responsibilities investigators have when conducting research involving human participants are listed below:

- 1. Conducting the Research.** You are responsible for making sure that the research is conducted according to the REC approved research protocol. You are also responsible for the actions of all your co-investigators and research staff involved with this research. You must also ensure that the research is conducted within the standards of your field of research.
- 2. Participant Enrollment.** You may not recruit or enroll participants prior to the REC approval date or after the expiration date of REC approval. All recruitment materials for any form of media must be approved by the REC prior to their use.
- 3. Informed Consent.** You are responsible for obtaining and documenting effective informed consent using **only** the REC-approved consent documents/process, and for ensuring that no human participants are involved in research prior to obtaining their informed consent. Please give all participants copies of the signed informed consent documents. Keep the originals in your secured research files for at least five (5) years.
- 4. Continuing Review.** The REC must review and approve all REC-approved research proposals at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk but not less than once per year. There is **no grace period**. Prior to the date on which the REC approval of the research expires, **it is your responsibility to submit the progress report in a timely fashion to ensure a lapse in REC approval does not occur**. If REC approval of your research lapses, you must stop new participant enrollment, and contact the REC office immediately.
- 5. Amendments and Changes.** If you wish to amend or change any aspect of your research (such as research design, interventions or procedures, participant population, informed consent document, instruments, surveys or recruiting material), you must submit the amendment to the REC for review using the current Amendment Form. You **may not initiate** any amendments or changes to your research without first obtaining written REC review and approval. The **only exception** is when it is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants and the REC should be immediately informed of this necessity.
- 6. Adverse or Unanticipated Events.** Any serious adverse events, participant complaints, and all unanticipated problems that involve risks to participants or others, as well as any research related injuries, occurring at this institution or at other performance sites must be reported to Malene Fouche within **five (5) days** of discovery of the incident. You must also report any instances of serious or continuing problems, or non-compliance with the REC's requirements for protecting human research participants. The only exception to this policy is that the death of a research participant must be reported in accordance with the Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee Standard Operating Procedures. All reportable events should be submitted to the REC using the Serious Adverse Event Report Form.
- 7. Research Record Keeping.** You must keep the following research related records, at a minimum, in a secure location for a minimum of five years: the REC approved research proposal and all amendments; all informed consent documents; recruiting materials; continuing review reports; adverse or unanticipated events; and all correspondence from the REC.
- 8. Provision of Counselling or emergency support.** When a dedicated counsellor or psychologist provides support to a participant without prior REC review and approval, to the extent permitted by law, such activities will not be recognised as research nor the data used in support of research. Such cases should be indicated in the progress report or final report.
- 9. Final reports.** When you have completed (no further participant enrollment, interactions or interventions) or stopped work on your research, you must submit a Final Report to the REC.
- 10. On-Site Evaluations, Inspections, or Audits.** If you are notified that your research will be reviewed or audited by the sponsor or any other external agency or any internal group, you must inform the REC immediately of the impending audit/evaluation.

## ADDENDUM B: Permission from the respective education departments to conduct research in government schools



Directorate: Research

[Audrey.wyngaard@westerncape.gov.za](mailto:Audrey.wyngaard@westerncape.gov.za)  
tel: +27 021 467 9272  
Fax: 0865902282  
Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000  
[wced.wcape.gov.za](http://wced.wcape.gov.za)

**REFERENCE:** 20180813-5160

**ENQUIRIES:** Dr A T Wyngaard

Mrs Marissa Von Mollendorf  
4 La Roche Noord  
Retief Street  
Northern Paarl  
7646

**Dear Mrs Marissa Von Mollendorf**

### **RESEARCH PROPOSAL: SHAPING IDENTITY AND EDUCATING MALE CHORISTERS: EXPLORING THE MUSIC TEACHER'S INFLUENCE ON MALE SINGERS' SELF-PERCEPTION DURING THE VOICE CHANGE**

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **03 September 2018 till 31 January 2019**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

**The Director: Research Services  
Western Cape Education Department  
Private Bag X9114  
CAPE TOWN  
8000**

We wish you success in your research.

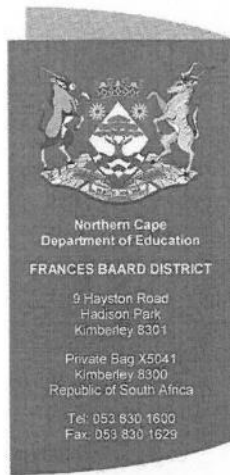
Kind regards.

Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard

**Directorate: Research**

**DATE: 15 August 2018**





## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Enquiries: L. Monyera  
Contact No: 053 830 1602  
Ref No: L4.3.4  
Date: 04 September 2018

Marissa von Mollendorf  
4 La Roche Noord  
Relief Street  
Northern Paarl  
7646

### **SUBJECT: REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS WITHIN FRANCES BAARD DISTRICT**

The Northern Cape Department of Education encourages research, which is in the best interest of education and will consider any meaningful research project in this regard. The Department therefore supports the conducting of high quality research that enables the Department to make evidence based policy decisions, and to enhance delivery of quality education to our learners.

When preparing your questionnaires, you must take the sensitivity of the contents, learners, since respondents such as the Northern Cape Department of Education, educators, learners, governing bodies and parents may not be offended or embarrassed by them.

You must obtain consent from participant categories, such as Principals, parents, teachers and learners. After approval has been granted by the Northern Cape Department of Education, the following conditions would be applicable.


1. There must not be any financial implications for the Northern Cape Department of Education.
2. Institutions and respondents must not be identifiable in any way from the result of the investigation.
3. The researcher must make all the arrangements concerning his/her investigation.
4. Prospective researchers must present a copy of the written approval of the Northern Cape Department of Education to the head of the institution concerned before any research may be undertaken.
5. In case of some research projects it will be necessary for the applicant to obtain the written permission of the parents or legal guardians concerned personally before learners/ learners are involved.
6. Research may not be conducted during official contact time, as educator programmes should not be interrupted.
7. The research may not be conducted during the fourth term.
8. The research will be limited to those schools or institutions for which approval has been granted.



9. A copy of the completed report, dissertation or thesis, accompanied by a separate synopsis (maximum 2-3 typed pages) of the most important findings and recommendations if it does not already contain a synopsis, must be provided to the Frances Baard District Director.

This letter herewith provides you with permission for the research project to be conducted at Schools within the Frances Baard District in the Northern Cape Province on condition the above are adhered to.

Yours sincerely

 05/09/2018

**L. MONYERA**

**ACTING DISTRICT DIRECTOR: FRANCES BAARD DISTRICT**

Enquiries: KK Motshumi  
Ref: Research Permission: M Von Mollendorf  
Tel. 051 404 9283 / 9221 / 079 503 4943  
Email: [K.Motshumi@fseducation.gov.za](mailto:K.Motshumi@fseducation.gov.za)



education  
Department of  
Education  
FREE STATE PROVINCE

M von Mollendorf  
4 La Roche Noord  
Retief Street  
NORTHERN PAARL, 7646

083 413 0119

Dear Mrs von Mollendorf

#### APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE FREE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

This letter serves as an acknowledgement of receipt of your request to conduct research in the Free State Department of Education.

1. **Topic:** Shaping identity and educating male choristers: exploring the music teacher's influence on male singers' self-perception during the voice change.

**Schools involved:** Grey College.

**Target Population:** 80 Choir members and 30 Learners doing Grade 8.

2. **Period of research:** From the third week of January 2019 until the September 2019. Please note that the department does not allow any research to be conducted during the fourth term (quarter) of the academic year.
3. Should you fall behind your schedule by three months to complete your research project in the approved period, you will need to apply for an extension.
4. The approval is subject to the following conditions:
  - 4.1 The collection of data should not interfere with the normal tuition time or teaching process.
  - 4.2 A bound copy of the research document or a CD, should be submitted to the Free State Department of Education, Room 319, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Old CNA Building, Charlotte Maxeke Street, Bloemfontein.
  - 4.3 You will be expected, on completion of your research study to make a presentation to the relevant stakeholders in the Department.
  - 4.4 The ethics documents must be adhered to in the discourse of your study in our department.
5. Please note that costs relating to all the conditions mentioned above are your own responsibility.

Yours sincerely

  
DR JEM SEKOLANYANE  
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

DATE: 13/11/2018

RESEARCH APPLICATION VON MOLLENDORF M PERMISSION EDITED 6 NOV 2018, MOTHEO DISTRICT  
Strategic Planning, Policy & Research Directorate  
Private Bag X20565, Bloemfontein, 9300 - Room 318, Old CNA Building, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Charlotte Maxeke Street, Bloemfontein  
Tel: (051) 404 9283 / 9221 Fax: (086) 6678 678

## **ADDENDUM C: Letter to headmasters**



UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY  
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

Att: The headmaster

My name is Marissa von Mollendorf and I am the Head of Music at Paarl Boys' High School. I am currently busy with research leading towards a MMus degree in musical education from the University of Stellenbosch. The topic of my research is exploring the adolescent male singers' self-perception during the process of voice change. My supervisor is Martin Berger.

As very little research has been done locally in this regard, this study will enable South African voice coaches and choir teachers to better understand their role in guiding young adolescent males through the process of voice change. This understanding should also contribute to retaining more boys in singing activities during this phase, and thereafter. I believe that this is a unique opportunity towards building a male choral culture in South Africa, which holds a multitude of benefits.

I am approaching four schools (two all-boys schools, two of mixed gender) as my sample groups for the empirical study, and I would like to ask permission to visit your choir and any grade 8 class, for two periods of about 45 minutes each. During this time, I will present a short introductory lesson, explaining my research and all the participants' rights, and then guide them through a questionnaire (a draft of the questionnaire is attached to this mail for your perusal).

The questionnaire will be repeated in about 3 months. For the second round, I will send a recapitulation video with the questionnaires to the relevant teachers.

All information collected from the surveys will be dealt with, and published, anonymously, in order to protect the boys' rights and identities. In order to compare the two questionnaires, each student will receive a personal number. However, each school will have the only copy of their students' names with unique numbers. I will therefore only be able to compare numbers, without knowing which participant the number belongs to.



I have taken the liberty to attach a permission letter, which you can complete and send back to me on an official letter head of your school, if you are willing to permit me to proceed with this study.

Thank you in advance

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marissa von Mollendorf', with a large, sweeping horizontal stroke across the bottom.

Marissa von Mollendorf

## ADDENDUM D: Headmasters' permission

### DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY THE HEADMASTER

I confirm that:

- I have read the above information and it is written in a language that I am comfortable with.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been answered.
- All issues related to privacy, and the confidentiality and use of the information have been explained.

By signing below, I DA Swart (name of headmaster)  
agree that the researcher may approach the boys to take part in this research  
study, as conducted by Marissa von Mollendorf.

Signature of headmaster

Date

21/6/2018

### DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

As the **principal investigator**, I hereby declare that the information contained in  
this document has been thoroughly explained to the headmaster. I also declare  
that the headmaster was encouraged and given ample time to ask any questions.

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date

2018/06/20

# DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY THE HEADMASTER

I confirm that:

- I have read the above information and it is written in a language that I am comfortable with.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been answered.
- All issues related to privacy, and the confidentiality and use of the information have been explained.

By signing below, I T. P. Mullissier (name of headmaster) agree that the researcher may approach the boys to take part in this research study, as conducted by Marissa von Mollendorf).

[Signature] ..... 21. 6. 2018  
Signature of headmaster Date

# DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

As the principal investigator, I hereby declare that the information contained in this document has been thoroughly explained to the headmaster. I also declare that the headmaster was encouraged and given ample time to ask any questions.

By signing below, I [Signature] (name of headmaster) agree that the researcher may approach the boys to take part in this research study, as conducted by Marissa von Mollendorf).

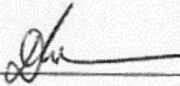
[Signature] ..... 2018/06/20  
Signature of Principal Investigator Date

### DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY THE HEADMASTER

I confirm that:

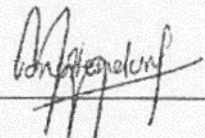
- I have read the above information and it is written in a language that I am comfortable with.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been answered.
- All issues related to privacy, and the confidentiality and use of the information have been explained.

By signing below, I DEON SCHEEPERS (name of headmaster) agree that the researcher may approach the boys to take part in this research study, as conducted by Marissa von Mollendorf).

 ..... 21/06/18  
Signature of headmaster Date

### DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

As the **principal investigator**, I hereby declare that the information contained in this document has been thoroughly explained to the headmaster. I also declare that the headmaster was encouraged and given ample time to ask any questions.

 2018/06/20  
Signature of Principal Investigator Date



### DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY THE HEADMASTER

I confirm that:

- I have read the above information and it is written in a language that I am comfortable with.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been answered.
- All issues related to privacy, and the confidentiality and use of the information have been explained.


By signing below, I A.C. Victor (name of headmaster) agree that the researcher may approach the boys to take part in this research study, as conducted by Marissa von Mollendorf).

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of headmaster

2018.06.20  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

As the principal investigator, I hereby declare that the information contained in this document has been thoroughly explained to the headmaster. I also declare that the headmaster was encouraged and given ample time to ask any questions.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal Investigator

2018/06/20  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **ADDENDUM E: Letter to parents**



UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY  
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

### **STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY**

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#### **CONSENT FOR CHILDREN TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

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I, Marissa von Mollendorf, would like to invite your son to take part in a study conducted by me, from the department of Music at Stellenbosch University. I am an MA student and this project forms part of my research thesis. He will be invited as a possible participant because he forms a part of the target population of my study.

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This study will enable South African voice coaches and choir teachers to better understand their role in guiding young adolescent males through the process of voice change.

#### **2. WHAT WILL BE ASKED OF THE CHILD?**

If you consent to him taking part in this study, the researcher will then approach him for his assent to take part in the study. If he agrees to take part in the study, he will be asked to complete a questionnaire about voice change and choral singing.

I will be visiting his class OR choir practice for two periods of about 45 minutes each. During this time, I will present a short introductory lesson, explaining my research and all the participants' rights, and then guide him through the questionnaire.

#### **3. POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

No uncomfortable questions will be asked, and the boys are under no obligation to answer any question that will lead to any discomfort or emotional trauma.

#### **4. POSSIBLE BENEFITS TO THE CHILD OR TO THE SOCIETY**

Very little research has been done locally and the boys' participation will enable South African voice coaches and choir teachers to better understand their role in guiding young adolescent males through the process of voice change. This understanding should also contribute to retaining more boys in singing activities during this phase, and thereafter. I believe that this is a unique opportunity towards building a male choral culture in South Africa, which holds a multitude of benefits.

#### **5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

None.

#### **6. PROTECTION OF THE CHILD'S INFORMATION, CONFIDENTIALITY AND IDENTITY**

All information collected from the surveys will be dealt with, and published, anonymously, in order to protect the boys' rights and identities. In order to compare the two questionnaires, each student will receive a personal number. The list of names and numbers will be destroyed as soon as the second questionnaire is handed out. I will therefore only be able to compare numbers, without knowing which participant the number belongs to.

Data will be stored both in hard copy and electronically. The hard copy will be filed in a locked cabinet; of which I have the only key. The electronic copy will be saved on a USB-drive, and the file(s) will be password protected, to ensure that nobody else can access any information.

#### **7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

Every boy can choose whether to be part of this study or not. If you consent to your son taking part in the study, please note that he may choose to withdraw or decline participation at any time without any consequence. He may also refuse to answer any questions he doesn't want to answer and still remain in the study.

#### **8. RESEARCHERS' CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact me, Marissa von Mollendorf, at [marissa@paarlboyshigh.org.za](mailto:marissa@paarlboyshigh.org.za), or my supervisor, Martin Berger, at [maberger@sun.ac.za](mailto:maberger@sun.ac.za).

## **9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. Neither you nor your son is waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your or your son's rights as a research participant, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [[mfouche@sun.ac.za](mailto:mfouche@sun.ac.za); 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

.....



## DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY THE PARENT/GUARDIAN

I confirm that:

- I have read the above information and it is written in a language that I am comfortable with.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been answered.
- All issues related to privacy, and the confidentiality and use of the information have been explained.

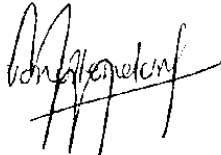
By signing below, I \_\_\_\_\_ (name of parent / guardian) agree that the researcher may approach my son to take part in this research study, as conducted by Marissa von Mollendorf.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of parent / guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

As the **principal investigator**, I hereby declare that the information contained in this document has been thoroughly explained to the parents. I also declare that the parents was encouraged and given ample time to ask any questions.




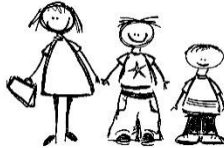
\_\_\_\_\_  
2019/01/01

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date

## ADDENDUM F: Letter to participants

	STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY <b>ASSENT FORM FOR MINORS</b>
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**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:** Shaping male identity and the role of the music teacher during voice change

**RESEARCHERS' NAME(S):** Marissa von Mollendorf

**RESEARCHER'S CONTACT NUMBER:** 083 413 0119

### **What is RESEARCH?**

Research is something we do find **NEW KNOWLEDGE** about the way things (and people) work. We use research projects or studies to help us find out more about children and teenagers and the things that affect their lives, their schools, their families and their health. We do this to try and make the world a better place!

### **What is this research project all about?**

I would like to find out why many boys stop with music and choir when they reach high school, and also what the impact of a music teacher is on boys at the age when their voices change.

### **Why have I been invited to take part in this research project?**

I have chosen four schools (in three provinces) to look at, as a sample of boys in the whole of South Africa. I have asked your headmaster if I may visit and ask questions to the boys in the choir, as well as a grade 8 class. You have a very important role, as very little research has been done on this topic in South Africa.

### **Who is doing the research?**

I, Marissa, am a music teacher in Paarl and I am very interested in knowing more about this subject. Your participation will help my research, studying towards a Master's degree in Music at the University of Stellenbosch.

### **What will happen to me in this study?**

I will visit your choir / class at your school. After explaining everything to you in person, I will give you a questionnaire to fill out, asking questions about your voice, and your participation in music / choir (if applicable).

### **Can anything bad happen to me?**

I have not asked any uncomfortable questions, and you can answer the questionnaire without putting your name anywhere. However, if something does make you uncomfortable, you can stop filling out the questionnaire at any time.

### **Can anything good happen to me?**

As I have said before, very little research has been done on this subject in South Africa. You will be helping music teachers to understand the period of voice change better, and also why so many boys stop with music lessons in high school.

### **Will anyone know I am in the study?**

Nobody will know. Even I will not have your name, so there are no risks of being identified.

### **Who can I talk to about the study?**

You can talk to your headmaster or choir teacher, or contact me directly (number at the top of the first page).



### **What if I do not want to do this?**

If anything about this research makes you uncomfortable you can say no to participating, or you can stop at any time during the process, without any consequences. Even after your parents / headmaster have given consent, you can pull out without getting into any trouble.

Do you understand this research study and are you willing to take part in it?

YES

NO

Has the researcher answered all your questions?

YES

NO

Do you understand that you can STOP being in the study at any time?

YES

NO

---

Signature of Child

---

Date

## ADDENDUM G: Questionnaire

### VOCAL CHANGE & CHORAL SINGING

### QUESTIONNAIRE

For official use

School code:

B1	B2	M1	M2
----	----	----	----

Personal number \_\_\_\_\_

### SECTION A: YOUR VOICE CHANGE

***Spend about 10 minutes on section A.***

*Only answer this section if your voice has changed, or is busy changing. Otherwise, go directly to question 9.*

1. Did someone guide you through your voice change or speak with you about it?

Yes	No
-----	----

2. If "yes" at question 1, describe your relationship with this person.

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3. If "no" at question 1, would you have liked to be able to talk to someone about your voice change? Describe someone that you would have liked to guide you through this process.

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4. What do you like more - your current voice or your previous voice?

Current	Previous	Unsure
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5. Describe what you like more about the voice you chose in question 4.

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6. How do you feel with your changed voice? (don't just say *good/bad...*)

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7. Was the voice change process positive or negative for you? Rate the experience by choosing one of the following:

Very positive	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Very negative
---------------	----------	---------	----------	---------------

8. Please describe your experience going through voice change.

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## SECTION B: YOUR SCHOOL CHOIR

***Spend about 15 minutes on section B.***

9. Are you part of your school's choir?

Yes	No
-----	----

10. Please motivate your decision about joining/not joining the choir.

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11. If you are not currently in the choir, what would motivate you to join?  
If you are in the choir, what might make you consider leaving?

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12. How would you rank the success of your school's choir in competitions?

Excellent	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Unsure
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13. What impression does your school's choir make on you personally?

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14. Describe your school's choir conductor as a teacher, without using his/her name.

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15. Were you part of your primary school's choir at any stage?

Yes	No
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16. If you sang in your primary school choir, but are not currently singing in the choir, why did you stop?

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17. On a scale from 1 (completely disagree) – 10 (completely agree), please rate the following statements. Encircle your preferred answer.

17.1. Singing is a feminine activity (something more for girls than boys).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

17.2. Boys who play rugby are more masculine (manly) than boys who sing in the choir.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

17.3. Bases (men with low singing voices) are more masculine (manly) than tenors (men with high singing voices).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

17.4. It is embarrassing if girls hear you sing.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

17.5. If you are/were not in the choir and your best friend decided to join, you would join the choir as well.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

If you had to make a choice, would you choose sport or choir as an extra-mural activity?

Sport	Choir	Unsure
-------	-------	--------

18. If it were possible to combine both activities (sport and choir), how likely would you do both?

Definitely	Very likely	Likely	Unlikely	Definitely not	Unsure
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### **SECTION C: TIME TO BE CREATIVE**

***Spend about 10 minutes on section C.***

Please draw a picture of yourself:

- a) Before and after your voice change, if your voice has changed; or
- b) What you think it will be like after your voice has changed, versus now.

*Thank you so much for your valuable input.*